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A GOOD MAN.

A Sermon preached in the West Church, July 8, on occasion of the Death of Samuel Barrett, D.D.

BY C. A. BARTOL.

JOHN vii. 12: "He is a good man."

WE have all heard of the decease, on the 24th of June, in Roxbury, of Samuel Barrett, Doctor of Divinity, born in Royalston, Mass., Aug. 16, 1795; a graduate of Harvard, 1818; and ordained first minister of the Twelfth Congregational Church in Boston, Feb. 9, 1825. I wish to speak of him to-day, but not historically. I shall not dwell on the dates of his life, the offices he filled, the discourses he published, the tenets he held, or the titles he bore; but take a text from the mouth of all that knew him, as well as from the gospel he preached, and call him "a good man."

What is it to be "good," — the word first stammered by the child, and last ideal of the man? The words "god" and "good" are identical, — have each the same root. Artificial definitions are given; but goodness, while spiritual, is the most natural of things, and the human heart is never deceived in it. Instinct is the only test. No person is good, if we have to reason the matter and prove him so. Goodness is a shining thing that always proves itself, like the sun.

Conspicuous in him was this clear and warm benignity, whose beams fell with a divine impartiality. All his brethren loved him. Ministers, like college students, find each other out, and from their general verdict there is no appeal. No bigot's sourness or fanatical ferment, no forgery of an ostentatious form, no counterfeit of a sectarian creed, which the unsophisticated feeling stamps and nails as spurious, did he ever attempt to pass for genuine; though he never reckoned himself among the elect, saints and favorites of the Heavenly King. He was good because he was unpretending,—the most unpretending of men, while there beat in him the most benevolent of hearts. Such goodness, that has no story to tell of its birth, and describes not its experience or process of conversion, is sometimes, by a conceit of orthodoxy in religion, branded as a merely amiable quality, giving no warrant of salvation, and ruled out of court. But amiability is better than self-complacent and intolerant grace,—the inhuman exclusive temper, that is not the grace of God, who is the most *amiable* of beings.

Dr. Barrett was a good man. There was about him nothing cold, indifferent, or tame; rather an extraordinary fervor. But his heart had no foul or malign element. His fire showed the purity of a smokeless flame. It was fed with no selfish or sensual fuel, but sacred essences of humanity and truth. Let me bear him witness! Throughout these thirty years of our mutual acquaintance, I never met him but to see this divine ardor in his face, hear it in his voice, and mark it in his manner; and to breathe in his whole atmosphere that indescribable blending of beautiful traits, the secret of whose unity could no more be detected than the way the seven colors melt into the spotless white. So gentle his look, so cordial his greeting, it was difficult to imagine that an almost volcanic passion was native to his soul. But never was victory more perfect than in the charity to which his temper was schooled and subdued. It was impassioned virtue. All high virtue is impassioned. It must be an enthusiasm. Away with the icy morality of conformity to an external rule, and let devotion to God and man come instead! It was unequivocal in

him. There was, in both public and private speech, a peculiar catch in his breath, which I think must have come from early lessons of self-control, and, like the pall of a windlass, withstood any unguarded slip. Within my hearing certainly, no harsh or ungenerous expression ever escaped, though whatever got vent showed, with his mildness could go along what zeal. How his bosom heaved when the wind of inspiration smote him, making us think of a sudden swell of the sea! One could never get over marvelling at this swift, strange softness in the stream from his lips.

The combination too, in character — so rare and hard — of the *kind* with the *sincere*, in him was complete. All the trains of his virtue, connected throughout the continent of his soul; and the sharpest contrasts of excellence were to him no cross. How easily and irresistibly the current and cataract of his feeling bore him to uncontrollable candor, yet how invariably his sympathy turned him to compassion, as the rapids of Niagara bend to glassy smoothness at the edge of the fall! His veracity seemed a law. He did not know how to tell a lie. I do not think he could have done it. Yet there is no attribute in him his friends would perhaps sooner single out than his wisdom, though it was wisdom without suspicion of management or cunning. So sagacious was he, that, when a clerical brother was asked if he was going to take a certain course, he answered, "I suppose so, for Dr. Barrett predicts it." Yet he was as simple as he was wise. With shrewdness, I should say, he united self-forgetfulness; but that there appeared really no *self* to forget. Self-denial was self-indulgence. His entire self-government set him against all violent procedure, even in reform. Yet, though late in the field, he was loyal to the core; for when the enemies of freedom showed their hand, and began to play with guns their terrible game, none resisted with more resolution. He was cautious, but brave; prudent, yet vehement for the right. Modesty and courage twined their emblems on his shield, and set their seal, a crest in shadow, on his brow. He verified the Scripture, that a good man shall be satisfied from himself. He was not of those whose public service seeks pay in personal promotion,

or has private ambition for its impulse and taint. He was not forward, blew no trumpet; he had no desire to lead; he shrunk from appearing on the platform, or seeing his name in print. He gave the surest certificate of moral greatness in that preference, which many ministers are losing, for obscure work. Monckton Milnes's "Lay of the Humble" would have had for him a relish. Yet he was of such independent stamina, he could not be led, save by such as were themselves under the lead of reason and conscience,—the great and universal light. It is harder to lead the lowly than the proud. His sensibility matched his common-sense. When one of his early companions, failing in his lesson, wept at a teacher's reprimand, he was so touched, that, always remembering and quoting it in after-life, he would say, "Ah, those tears! I always prophesied from them what you would become."

That, thus worthy, he was also happy, I need not say; for of such goodness happiness is but a form. It flowed from it as a spring in him. He needed for his pleasure no excitements, entertainments, journeys, or shows. He found it in life and nature, and his own aim and labor every day. To no man did the common scene, without special favor, more suffice.

"The common earth, the air, the skies,  
To him were opening paradise."

Bright and cheerful views his own mind moved him to take. To him, in his goodness, all was good: the world was a good world, the race was a good race, all fortune was good fortune, and Providence was infinitely good. In the darkest times he never despaired. No dirge of defeat, but only songs of deliverance, for him! Nothing so ruinous but could serve as foundation for the building of his hope. I suppose there never was profounder faith in the future of mankind, and the immortal destiny and bliss of the children of God. His goodness was blessedness: for misery is sin, and about the wretched is something bad. How deep his content, how homely his delight, we have a curious proof in his obtaining many years ago in the neighborhood of Boston, in a lonely spot, a piece of ground, to which he would go, seeking his recreation from



study and social tasks, in solitary toil of tillage, raising potatoes in the sweat of his brow. What finer demonstration could there be of unexhausted vitality, in such a profession as his, straining every nerve, than such voluntary industry, chosen instead of concert, opera, spectacle or play! Wherefore but because of the peace and comfort in his own honest and warmly throbbing breast, was no productive and useful occupation, for his amusement insufficient or mean? That was a solace and restorative to him which would have weighed on others as a stint. This happy disposition made his presence such a charm in every circle, as it was the endless delight of his own house; so that, when his *goodness* was suggested at the grave, as a consolation in his household's extreme grief at his departure, the reply followed instantly from them, "Nobody knows how good he was!" But the earnestness of his convictions, the warmth of his affections, the soaring of his piety, and spread of his philanthropy, could be hid from none within his reach,—though with so little of what are called gifts and graces. As a pulpit orator he had no great fame. He could not play very well on that vocal instrument, finer than clarion or violin; and to those demanding nicely ordered gestures and delicately graduated tones, he was not specially attractive in the desk. But upon some of us there were few men who won so much as he, by his delivery. It had the prime merits of heartiness, frankness, lucid language, and glowing thought. I remember well a ministerial class in elocution, whose teacher put him for innate persuasive capacity at the head, although when he tried to make out that one of his college mates was older than himself, by saying, "You taught me elocution in the university," the quick response was, "I could do that now!" Yet there is in many men a captivating manner, with less power than his hearers felt from his tongue,—kindled as with a live coal from the altar: and it is memorable that this faculty grew to the end, and his greatest effects crowned the septuagenarian's closing days. Well if we distinguished better between pinchbeck and gold! For in nothing is there more illusion, not to say jugglery, than in this matter of what is called eloquence. How we are stirred

by some popular discourses, till we discover the art of their motions, and artifice of their inflections, which some betrayal from behind the scenes demonstrates to be but a subtler kind of wire-pulling, a sort of manufactory in the throat, with which communicates no spontaneous fountain of love and faith in the bosom, deeper down. Thenceforth all the exquisite shape of a sentence, the bodily agony and sweat, or elaborate display before an audience, pass for nought. No such fatal discovery was ever made in him. Whatever abrupt or awkward entered occasionally into his vocalization, his absorption in his theme none could doubt, while there was often a flute-like sweetness and artless melody in the sound of his notes which was an articulation of the seldom equalled goodness of his whole being. The pith of his period never failed, lack as it might ornamentation of fancy or taste. The unexpended breath, that, with a peculiarity all his own, came out at the end of a clause or paragraph, betokened, what was unspeakable in his subject; for he had a sense of grandeur; or it hinted what his transcendent consideration kept him from risking pain to his listeners by putting into words.

For — I come back to that always — he was a good man; and goodness is shown by refraining from what will hurt, as truly as by imparting what will bless. They are the *bad* who inflict needless pangs, who are ready to censure and complain, who search the armor of their neighbors' reputation to see where a pin's point of criticism can be thrust in, or buzz after a place where they can sting and draw blood. Never was pity more tender or reflective and circumspect. I should leave out one of his principal traits, if I omitted this uniform, unsurpassed forbearance to rub unnecessarily the sore spot. He knew where it was, but touched it not. "Be careful," said one lately to the next sitter in the car, "when you get up, not to strike my amputated arm." Dr. Barrett never superfluously reminded you of any unpleasant circumstance. Not that he was reticent or close. He was transparent, and altogether decided in his opinion. But he differed entirely from those who are diligent to thrust in the probe where they have not been called as surgeons, and chafing into mor-

bid activity old and half-healed wounds. The young are good judges; and he singularly drew them, as a teacher, in early life. He had, as his birthright, a fellow-feeling, by which he immediately and infallibly understood others, as if his breath were an ether for their distress: though often he could say little, he felt so much. It is not surprising, but very beautiful, that, after singular physical soundness and health, in his own time of suffering, his patience was so great. Those about him of his family, having feared, under such pressure, his tranquillity might give way, were struck with his composure and self-possession, in a disease attended with unusual anguish. But all was in keeping with the love and duty that dictated his course, and comes in evidence, that the unassuming is the accomplishing soul.

After leaving the Chambers-street Society, though he felt he had a right to be relieved from active work, he was nevertheless constantly moving, at all times and in all weather, where duty called him. His greatest pleasure was in his study, and during his illness he struggled to this favorite spot so long as his strength would allow; and afterwards was wheeled in, every day, until it became impossible to move him. One of his last wishes on his dying day was to be carried once more to this room, but his attendants were obliged to refuse. His thumb-worn bible, covered with marginal notes, and his long-used hymn-book, were ever by his bedside; and it was his daily wish to have his wife read some favorite hymn,—the one he was most fond of being the first in the book, commencing "Come, thou Almighty King!" His malady was of a very painful nature; but he bore it with a hero's and martyr's mind, calm and clear. His physician said he had never witnessed, in similar circumstances, a balance so complete. The nerves of his limbs becoming partially paralyzed gave him the feeling of a third arm, all whose sensations, while aware that they were illusions, he precisely described. In this his first exercise with exquisite pain appeared the demonstration not only of his Christian fortitude, but of a disinterestedness which avoided giving needless trouble to those about him, ready with every ministration in the offices of unwearied hands.

The morning before he died, he awoke from a short sleep, and told the nurse he had just had a vision of heaven, in which the angels appeared, and every thing was bright and beautiful. Then, coming to his ordinary consciousness, he remarked, "But it is only a dream;" and it apparently passed from his mind. Was not that dream the beginning of the dawn? Does it not remind us of Thomas Browne's idea, that we are all asleep in this world?

"These are my drowsy days: in vain  
I now do wake to sleep again:  
Oh, come that hour when I shall never  
Sleep again, but wake for ever!"

It has come to him! On that Saturday, afterwards, Dr. Barrett had such use of his faculties as to be able to counsel his children, particularly on their duties in life.

When Sunday came, he knew — how well always he had known — the day! But his articulation had become indistinct. He evidently wanted something which he could not intelligibly express. The word "sermon" was vaguely uttered, and it seemed as though he were referring to his own old sermons. But one of his daughters, detecting a syllable sounding like "mount," guessed that he wanted to have the Sermon on the Mount read to him. His face gave tokens of joy when he found he was understood; and, as the reading went on, his whole countenance lightened with manifest signs of thorough appreciation. Shortly after, the paralysis, — which, rising from a local affection, had deadened the members, — rose to the vital organs; and, on the day of rest and peace, he passed away, as in a sleep. His disease, which, with its complications, formed an exceptional case, he had discussed freely with his physician, and studied philosophically, with a clearness of intellect and resignation of will, both bespeaking alike that which cannot perish.

He was a good man. Perhaps no clergyman has been more beloved by his parishioners and professional associates. Many a heart was in the coffin holding the precious remains that had been his body, — the shrine of a nature as noble and affectionate as is ever dressed in human form, still keeping in decay his innocent and generous look.

It may be thought something more than a curious observation, if I say his concluding selection of Scripture was significant of his character. The dying ordinarily choose chapters more sympathetic with their actual state, such as David's psalm about passing through the dark valley ; or Christ's comforting words at his leave-taking with his disciples ; or the pictures of the New Jerusalem, drawn with such transports for accompaniment in the incomparable splendors shooting forth from the light and shade of the Apocalypse. Why did he, so unusually and unconventionally, fix on the practical directions and admonitions of the Sermon on the Mount ? Because of their entire congeniality with his own habits and traits ! He unconsciously, in that last dying request, disclosed the entire drift of his purpose, tenor of his preaching, and leaning of his life. He, from whom none ever heard an accent of self-praise, unawares pronounced his own eulogy. He *was*, in life and death, what he desired to have vibrate on his failing ear, — the final echo of his belief, as it was prelude of the paradise to which he went. He had striven to model himself after the Master's plan ; and the satisfaction with which he listened, last of all things, to his Lord's solemn commands, was his already anticipated reward, commencing in a music, how delicious after pain, for his expiring moments, to thrill and deepen into the perpetual melodies of his angelic harp, which he would recover his voice to accompany ! For he was one who had done unto others as he would have others do unto him. If any man would compel him to go a mile, he would have gone twain. He would have been as likely as any other, when one asked for his coat, to let him have his cloak also. He strove to be perfect like the Father in heaven ; and when the floods of change came, and hundreds of the families of his church were swept so sadly away, ebbing before the "tide in the affairs of men," — yea, when the wind of death blew and beat, it was seen that his house was founded on a rock. Nothing of the sand had ever been in the supports he trusted and recommended : so he fell not, but stood and ascended.

Dr. Barrett rejoiced to be a Unitarian, and to build up the

Unitarian association and denomination as member, officer, editor, and votary without ambiguity every way. He accepted the authority, but not supreme divinity, of Christ. When one affirmed there must be something of special height or mystery in the *nature* of Jesus, he inquired, "More than in that of any other man?" There was a melancholy fitness in his decease, after the dissolution of the worshipping body that throve so under his care. How death seems to commiserate companions of many years, and not to divide them long! But for a short time the pastor has survived his church. As that church sprang in part from this very place, we are the natural mourners at this double doom. The mother here laments her offspring: the minister deplores the departure of his father and friend. The two longings,—of the flesh for its kindred dust, of the soul for its source,—he has fulfilled. But, as there is a resurrection in glory for the good man, so his teaching and example here below have not gone to the ground, but survive in the holy aspirations and righteous ways of all ever touched by his so unstained sanctity and positive faith. Could nothing else preserve his influence, it should be consecrated by the pattern of his behavior under a disappointment so sore as seeing the cherished enterprise, into which had gone his youthful heart and whole life, fail in his age. I remember wondering at his equanimity and brightness, changing not a jot at the crisis of his fate. Sorrow there must have been within. But he laid it not on others' shoulders. He begged nobody to share his woe. For the relics of his hope he made a grave in his own heart, and kept his funeral to himself. It was the sublimity of goodness. It was like the good man not to grieve any one more than he could help, even to lighten his own calamity.

To some sympathizers at least in my theme, on this occasion I speak. As bees come back to an old hive in the garden, and doves to the window from which they flew, not a few who were dear to him have returned to the ancient homestead, flourishing still as much as ever, though exposed to the same causes of waste, in the emigration of many hundreds of families, which emptied their newer house. How welcome their

presence in this sanctuary, they need not be told. From the deserted temple and the expiring guide, may they and their children, in these well-filled precincts, be not only a sacred charge, but a strong defence of the venerable shrine that rose more than a century and a quarter ago, in a building then the only shelter of common prayer in this part of the town ! As once before, in the day of British oppression, this church, less tempest-tost on the sea than on the land, sailed across the Bay of Fundy for a refuge,—if the ark of the Lord shall be afloat again to save its living contents, or increase and multiply for successive generations,—may they or theirs of the flock remain faithfully with us all in our posterity, in a fold too strong and prosperous to be ever abandoned, parted with, or taken down !

While the places that knew him still stand, our brother's tabernacle has vanished away. He himself has left this beautiful house of the senses,—constructed by the seeing of the eye, the hearing of the ear, and the touch of the hand,—which all must go out of before they can enter the deeper lodging of the soul. In our memory and love and hope is now his abode. But, as we believe, in the new body he inhabits, the old senses are refined and glorified ; so, to our exalted senses, in due time he shall return, and we come again into the range of his, if we hold on in the line of eternal life mortals can begin, and he pursued with a toil and patience that never banished, but only sweetened, his peculiar smile.

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### THE SPIRIT OF PRAYER.

PRAYER is not peculiar to any denomination of Christians, nor indeed to any type of religion. It is almost as universal as speech and as human intelligence itself. That there is a great difference between the prayers of heathens and Christians cannot be questioned ; but the difference does not consist, as might at first be thought, in intensity of emotion



so much as in correctness of apprehension. Protestant devotion has no more of warmth than Catholic; the Mahomedan is not less zealous than the Christian, and Pagans are often more devout than are either Mahomedans or Christians. Yet we do not hesitate on this account to assign to Paganism the lowest rank. Neither intelligent belief alone, nor fervent religious feeling alone, can make true worship. The two must be combined, so that the sentiment, which is the soul of prayer, shall be toned and shaped and directed by the reason. One is sometimes tempted to think that spirit and understanding in religion are to be found in the inverse ratio, so that the more there is of the one, the less there is of the other. To a certain extent it seems true, that, as religion becomes less superstitious, it declines in zeal; and, as it grows more rational, it loses something of its fervor. Intellectual culture may induce a neglect of spiritual culture; but respecting an apparent effect of this kind, we must not at once pronounce too positively. Yet we need not rashly infer a deterioration, inasmuch as an improved *quality* of religious feeling may more than atone for the diminution of *quantity*.

In the apostolic church at Corinth, the new religion found expression in forms with which we are personally unacquainted. With the joy which is the legitimate fruit of fresh and holier religious conceptions, there was mingled the caprice and extravagance incident to all childhood. The meetings of this church had even grown disorderly. The doctrine was, that every one should speak as he was moved by the Holy Spirit; and so, leaving all to the direction of feeling, several would be talking at the same time. Men and women were exhorting, praying, and speaking with tongues, in so confused and excited a manner that calm reflection was impossible, and the worship could be little more than a blind enthusiasm in the new faith. The "speaking with tongues," as it was called, was especially the disturbing element. From the way in which Paul described this exercise, and sought to curb it, we know that it was not the use of a foreign language for the sake of edifying strangers unacquainted with the Greek, but the utterance of sounds which had no distinct significance,

and were profitable only as inarticulate cries are, when words break down under unusual emotions. The apostle could not be satisfied with enthusiasm alone. He required rather an intelligent appreciation.

Even if we were to confine our attention to the devotional element, we must admit the truth of that lesson which the prophet learned on Horeb, that the voice of God is heard, not in the strong wind nor earthquake nor fire, but in the still, small voice. Not by great outward demonstration is the heartiest love to be recognized. Perfect love is not boisterous, but restful and quiet. The beautiful words in which one of our poets has given utterance to his complete satisfaction in the affection of home, apply as truly to the love of God.

— "a love as still  
As the broad river's peaceful might,  
Which, by high tower and lowly mill,  
Goes wandering at its own will,  
And yet doth ever flow aright.

And, on its full, deep breast serene,  
Like quiet isles my duties lie;  
It flows around them and between,  
And makes them fresh and fair and green,—  
Sweet homes wherein to live and die."

Respecting the devotional fervor of our own time, it is not unlikely that re-action against a one-sided piety may have carried us to an opposite extreme; and it is not unlikely, that as we have seen the unreasonableness of prayer from the old point of view, without attending to its significance regarded from our higher standing point, we have been led to the neglect of that which is not less true to the understanding than comforting to the spirit. If prayer were understood, it would never be spoken of lightly. The objections to it owe their force to the representation, that prayer is an attempt to persuade God to adopt our human ways and views.

We know that the stream of Divine love and blessing pours its broad, deep current into every unobstructed channel, and that there can be no partiality with God. His mercies, like the sunshine and the rain, like the air we breathe, and

the pure water, are diffused abroad, free to all who will take them. If prayer is the ignorant and selfish desire to interrupt this grand universal outpouring, and prevail upon God to give otherwise than according to his equal and adorable laws; if it supposes he is able to be partial, or that the desires and judgments of man are to be made God's rule of action,—then let us have no prayer; let us live and thrive as the rest of nature does, taking the daily bread that is given us as the pastures are freshened by the dew, and as the flower unfolds in the sun. But is this prayer? Must we who believe in the Infinite Father accept that as worship which was thought to be so by Jews and Pagans? Must we lose prayer because we have found God?

Men often argue about prayer as if it consisted of special requests,—such as that our plans for to-morrow may succeed, or that our friend may speedily recover from illness. This is not even an essential element in prayer. It might be altogether laid aside and dropped from our forms, and all that is holiest and dearest to the devotional mind remain untouched. I do not say that we should avoid such petitions as seem to imply a special interposition, but only that our estimation of prayer should not be based on a secondary and accidental feature of it. I doubt not it is well for us to carry all our desires and hopes and fears, our joys and griefs, our real and fancied wants, to God in prayer, not indeed with the hope that he will interfere with his eternal plans and means, but with the spirit that a little child ought to have in coming to his father or mother. It is proper that children should ask for that which they think they want, as well as for that which they know certainly the parent is willing to give. But as the child ought not to insist upon having that which the father deems unwise to grant, so, while we ask for that which is grateful to our feelings, we should leave our requests with God, not expecting they will be complied with, simply because we have asked, but that it will be as God sees best. And the petitioner who insists upon the gratification of his own desire and the fulfilment of his personal wishes, on the ground that he has asked and therefore ought to receive,

acts towards the All-Good Father the part of an ignorant or obstinate child.

Why, then, should we ask for special favors for our friends and ourselves, if the asking does not change God? We ought not to ask for supposed blessings, if we are not drawn to do so. If one does not feel like asking, it is mockery to ask; and, if he *does* feel moved to offer the petition and does so in the Christian spirit, he will be blessed thereby, whether his request is granted or denied.

But we have not yet come to the soul and substance of prayer. Prayer is conscious communion with God. There is a sense in which we, and all finite beings, commune unconsciously with the Infinite. To commune is to share, to have in common; and in all the universe there is a unity of life, and every created thing exists only as it shares the common life. If it were conceivable that God should not be, or be annihilated, nothing would remain,—neither life nor land nor air: there would be only darkness and emptiness. God is the underlying substance and power of all things. How it is that individual life and special forms of existence arise, and how they can be distinguished from the great whole of which they share, is a mystery unfathomable. On the one hand, we cannot deny our individuality; and, on the other, we cannot deny the veritable communion of the finite and the Infinite. We cannot look around us upon the manifold glories of creation with thoughtfulness, whether by day or night, in winter or summer, without feeling assured of one all-pervading Spirit which gives beauty to the earth, sublimity to the heavens, and an appreciating eye to man. The universe is one, and finds its unity and significance in the thought of God. Communion with God! Yea, the simplest flower communes with him, partaking continually of his perfections, and reflecting, according to its measure, the glory of God. Do not we also commune with him unconsciously? "He giveth to his beloved sleeping," and we rise refreshed and strengthened. It is not now and then that God interposes in our behalf. At no past time did he give us life more than he does at this present moment. It is not nature, considered

as something apart from God, in which we live and move and have our being; it is God, and God alone. To say that he is present with us is but a tame expression. Present, all around us,—ah soul! dost thou not know him nearer? Compared with the Divine presence, thy nearest friend is at a distance, and thine own body is a stranger to thee.

To pray with the spirit, and the understanding also, is to be aware of the Infinite presence, and to lose all selfish desires in the will of God, and freely allow the Infinite to control and use the finite.

When we speak of prayer, our thought is apt to be upon the formal exercise. The real prayer does not consist of certain words spoken in a certain manner. The real prayer is the soul's attitude and motion. If words express and help the inward prayer, they are good "as a means of grace;" if not, they are profane. The uttered prayer has its origin, like all true forms, in silence; and he who never prays in secret, prays not at all. But the closet into which we must go and shut the door is not *there*, but here within us; and, for the hallowed time of entering it, we must observe the indications of Providence in our moods and circumstances. When and how one prays is a matter between himself and God. Into our holy of holies no critical eye may intrude without desecration. All will agree, however, that we should make the most of those precious moments when the veil of sense is lifted from our eyes, and the spirit stands face to face with God; when the passions are at rest; when care is for the time laid aside,—it may be in the solemn stillness of night, or in the quiet and meditative woods, or when occupied with our daily duty: whenever the inspiration comes, let us have faith in it as a Divine revelation, and accept the word of God,—the bread of life!

Prayer, then, is not so much asking as it is receiving. Instead of being mere petition, it is the opening of the hand to grasp the proffered blessing: it is not wishing to change the thoughts of God towards us; it is entertaining such worthy and trustful thoughts towards him as to bring into our spirits perfect satisfaction and repose: it is not the

endeavor to win God over to our will, but rather to accept his, and make it our own. In fine, the end of true prayer is not to make God partial and human, but to become ourselves divine and universal. The highest reach of devotion is possible only to him who ceases to think of persuading God; and whatever one's formal doctrine of prayer may be, when he enters into the soul of worship, he loses all selfish and personal aims in holy aspiration and childlike trust.

"O rest of rests! O peace, serene, eternal!  
 Thou ever livest, and thou changest never;  
 And in the secret of thy presence dwelleth  
 Fulness of joy for ever and for ever."

D. B.

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## HYMNS FROM THE GERMAN.

TO THE ORIGINAL MELODIES.

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### LII.

GIEB DICH ZUFRIEDEN\*UND SEY STILLE.

*From the Berlin Hymn Book.*

TRANQUILLY yield thee, — peace possessing  
 In Him in whom thy being liveth:  
 He is the fulness of all blessing;  
 All thy care else nothing giveth.  
 He is the source  
 Of bliss the purest;  
 The radiant force  
 Of sunshine surest.  
 Tranquilly yield thee.

The God of peace and consolation  
 Loves and pities as a father:  
 No ill can harm with such relation,  
 Though the heaviest tempests gather.

Cross, woe, and want  
Find God's protection ;  
And Death's grim front  
Owns God's direction.  
Tranquilly yield thee.

Does promised help seem false or erring ?  
Come it will, or soon or later ;  
Does heart grow sick with long deferring ?  
This but makes the meed the greater.  
No hasty sprout  
Puts forth securely ;  
The time and fruit  
Must come maturely.  
Tranquilly yield thee.

There can and must be no exemption ;  
All that lives and moves must suffer :  
The fairest lot has no redemption  
From the sharper and the rougher.  
Where's house or nook  
The fable telling, —  
“ Grief never shook  
This quiet dwelling ” ?  
Tranquilly yield thee.

But yet there comes a day of resting ;  
God will all these steep ways level,  
Of chains and pains the heart divesting,  
Freeing us from every evil.  
Death soon will come  
Whom Heaven sendeth ;  
In that still doom  
All trouble endeth.  
Tranquilly yield thee.

The Lord doth join thee to those legions  
Of the souls in peace departed  
Who behold the blessed regions,  
No more tossed or heavy-hearted.



Who patient bear  
 The cross that's weighing,  
 Soon come to hear  
 The gracious saying,  
 "Tranquilly yield thee."

N. L. F.

## LIII.

## SCHAFFHAUSER UND N. BASLER GESANGBUCH.

Melody, — Gott ist mein Hirt: was mangelt jemals mir?

GOD is my Shepherd: how then can I need?  
 I follow with glad will.  
 On grassy banks he leads me out to feed  
 Beside the waters still.  
 He cheers the soul with grace the purest;  
 He guides the heart in ways the surest,  
 With shepherd care.

When down the darkening vale I move and look,  
 No peril shall affright,  
 For Thou art by my side; thy shepherd crook  
 Shall soothe and guard that night.  
 Though envious foes should scorn and spite me,  
 To feasts of joy thou dost invite me  
 At thy blest board.

With holy oil thou dost anoint my head;  
 My cup, it runneth o'er.  
 Thou Shepherd, who thus far dost fend and feed,  
 Wilt still do all and more.  
 While here, I feel thy comforts ever;  
 When there above, no time shall sever  
 My soul from thee.

N. L. F.

## REGENERATION.

THE doctrine of Regeneration, notwithstanding the exceeding plainness ascribed to it in the Scriptures, has received from theologians a wide variety of interpretations, and to many persons has become involved in great obscurity. It is spoken of sometimes as merely the transfer of our natural affections from the objects of earth to those of heaven. At others it is regarded as the direct creation by the Holy Spirit of a new principle in the human mind. There are some who make it consist in a reformation of the life and character; some who explain it as the subjection of the human will to the will of God; some who confound it with repentance and conversion; and very often it is made to include the whole experience of the soul in becoming a Christian.

There is no real need of any such obscurity. The great trouble is that men ignore the peculiar force of its Bible name, "born again," and try to make it out as an event entirely removed from our common life. The Saviour must have had some special reason for the words with which he described it. The more we investigate his teachings, the more we find that, however paradoxical they may seem at first glance, or however much they are obscured by our systems of theology, they are grounded on those broad and everlasting principles which run through all the Divine economy both natural and spiritual. And in discussing the subject, its nature, laws, means and ends, our safest way is not to throw aside his phraseology as a mere figure of speech, but to keep as near as possible to the idea by which it was at first suggested to his own mind.

Looking at it from this point of view, regeneration is not a new creation, or a reformation, or a change of heart; but, like all birth, it is the development of something already created. It is apparent to every one that the soul is not born all at once into any of its higher states of existence. There is a series of steps, a natural order, by which the

faculties wrapped up in its original germ are unfolded, each introducing it as truly as the first into a new realm of being. The child is something else than the mere dwarf of its parent, is different from the full-grown man not only in strength and size, but also in the proportion with which its various powers of reason, sense, affection, imagination, insight and conscience are combined. Its first birth is merely into the natural world; and it is then possessed of but little more than those faculties which it has in common with the animal kingdom, and leads but little else than an animal life. Very soon, however, it passes on to the development of its emotional nature,—begins to love its mother and companions, and to exhibit those passions and wants which distinguish humanity from the brutes. It is born from the animal world into the higher realm of home. Next in order we have the manifestation of its intellectual nature. It begins to think and ask questions. Reason, memory, imagination, and judgment are brought gradually into action: the child is born from the realm of sense and feeling into that of truth. Another stage of its growth, one, however, which takes place very early in life, is the unfolding of its moral nature. It learns to see those qualities to which at first it was utterly blind, the right and wrong of actions. It is impelled by a new voice in the soul to do the right and avoid the wrong: it is born into the kingdom of duty. A yet further step, coming usually in the first flush of youth and womanhood, is the development of what is called the æsthetic nature. It is a time when the melody of sounds and the form and color of objects, which hitherto have been perceived only by the outward ear and eye, appeal to something which is in the soul. We feel the divine element which there is in music and poetry and art, see an everlasting meaning in nature underlying its rocks and trees, see that actions besides their right and wrong have still another quality, that of nobility and sublimity. It is the beginning of life's young dream. The ideal of something better and fairer than earth can show, floats before the soul. We are born into God's great world of the beautiful. Then, as the last and loftiest unfolding of

the soul, the bright flower and consummation of all its other faculties, we have the development of our spiritual nature. The soul is made not only to know of, but to be conscious of the Divine Presence. His perfections are revealed to it through the inward sight. The sentiment of a love different from what it bears to all other beings is kindled in its lower depths. It delights in worship. There is a light around it richer than all that earth in its fairest moments has ever given. It is born from the world of nature into the kingdom of God.

It is this final step of our progress, the awakening of those powers which bring us into relation with God and eternity, the one which separates us most widely from the things of time, which has received pre-eminently the name of "new birth." The capacity for it, the germ out of which it springs, is not an after-thought on the part of God, but, like all the rest of our faculties, is something with which we are endowed at the very first, something which is given as truly as that of the mind or the heart, to every human being. The distinction between it and the other parts of our nature is recognized by the Bible in the clearest terms. Our Saviour says, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit," implying that in our relations with God a different set of faculties are brought into play from those that we use in relations with men. The Apostle Paul makes repeated reference to the natural and the spiritual man which exist within us: "The first Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam a quickening spirit:" "That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural and afterwards that which is spiritual:" "I delight in the law of God after the inward man, but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members:" "They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit:" "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritual discerned, but he that is

spiritual judgeth all things." How is it possible for any words to assert more clearly than these do that there is a separate part of our nature, a part, however, which is still ours, that was intended to deal especially with spiritual realities, one that comes into action after the natural powers? And, if so, what else could our Saviour have meant by that new birth which enables us to discern the kingdom of God than the first awakening of it into conscious life?

It is these facts in regard to its nature which help us at once to some idea of the period of life at which it ought normally to occur. As the capacity for it is placed on the same footing as all our other faculties in being a part of our original constitution, it is natural to suppose that in its development it must follow the same law with them, and appear in the earlier part of our lives; but on the other hand, as it is the loftiest and richest of all our attributes, we have no right to expect it until the others have reached at least a part of their growth.

This view is the more important because it is connected so intimately with what is the religious state of children. The old doctrine of total depravity was that from his childhood up, man is "wholly defiled in all faculties and parts of soul and body," and "utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good." But the new one, that which is held in most of the churches around us, makes it consist in simply a want of love to God. It is said the child is born without any spiritual affections, that it does not exhibit any during the first period of its life; and therefore that it is totally depraved. But in view of what regeneration really is, how could we expect it to have any such affections, yea, how would it be possible according to its very constitution for it to have them? It is a part of the Divine economy, an order which He has established with his own hand, that what is natural shall take the precedence of what is spiritual. The child has just as little the power of loving and communing with God during the first period of life as it has of reason, or work, or artistic taste. And we might as well blame it and call it a fool for not being logical and eloquent and full of

work, as to call its nature depraved because it is not then full of piety and prayer. There is not the slightest reason either in the Bible or in its own constitution to suppose that God ever meant a young child to be pious. The vital energies of its system are not sufficient to supply any other faculties than those of the body. Its first years were designed to be spent almost entirely in the realm of nature, sporting in the sunshine, developing its muscles on the playground, and enjoying the abundance of appetite and sense. A strong foundation of body is absolutely needed to support the superstructure of spirit. And that infinite wisdom which in spite of man's blunders to comprehend it, yea, and often the opprobrious terms which he applies to it, never fails for a single moment in its plans, has purposely delayed the development of our spiritual nature in order that the whole of our vital energy may be applied to the growth of flesh and sense. There is always something morbid in youthful piety. It is no healthy child which is spiritual-minded. The precocious manifestation of its religious nature is bought only at the price of its bodily vigor; and, like those apples which ripen in the midst of summer, it is sure to have a disease at its core, and to fall before its time to the earth. The true principle in dealing with children is not to force the development of their spiritual nature, not to mourn over the absence of all religious interest as so much depravity, but to prepare a way for the Lord's coming by the care of those faculties which he has already called into action. It is their bodies first of all that should be trained up in the way they should go. The best nurture and admonition of the Lord during all the earliest period of their lives is not sermons and doctrines, but food and drink. The home atmosphere, the culture of the simple home affections, the twin lessons of love and duty coming from the mother's lips, the rich earthly meaning of the word "father," — these things, though not piety in themselves, have far more to do with its vigor and growth in after-years than many of its direct teachings. The young eagle does not soar the less grandly up to heaven because it has been kept at first only in the narrow bounda-

ries of its home nest. And, if this work of preparation is thoroughly done, if all the rest of their nature is healthy and sound, and especially if it is kept from the sin and hardness of the world, there is no reason why the new birth should not occur with as much certainty as that of the mind or the conscience, and at least within the period of youth.

So in regard to the length of time which is required, if not for the new birth itself, yet for the completion of its work; the analogy of our other faculties would lead us to suppose that in its normal condition it would be a gradual process. It is a long time after their birth before even our bodies arrive at the full and conscious enjoyment of the world around them. The child's affections for its father and mother commence at the lowest point, and are the growth of years. Our intellectual faculties do not spring all at once into activity, but only by many slow and painful steps. And certainly there is nothing in our spiritual nature itself, nothing in the world to which it is introduced, that would lead us to expect that, normally, it would come under the operation of a different law. Then, too, it has been the experience of some of the noblest and truest Christians who have ever lived, that it is a gradual development. There is no particular time, no fixed day or hour, in which they can say they were born again. Their eyes were opened to the spiritual world in the same way as to that of truth and beauty and love. And the tide of divine life, beginning in their bosoms with a little spring of love, has flowed onward like a river in larger and ever larger abundance, till finally it has been the great motive power of their whole being.

But, while this is the true and normal process, we must remember, likewise, how seldom it is that the rest of our nature is in a condition to make it possible. The germs of our spiritual being are crusted over with the sins and cares of the world. Evil habits get dominion over us. We are blinded with superstition and prejudice and false beliefs. Our appetites and passions are developed out of all proportion to the rest of our powers. Thus the natural man is not merely indifferent to, but is brought into positive enmity



against God. In all such cases regeneration must of necessity be sudden. Our spiritual capacities are obliged to wait till they are roused into strength enough to break asunder their bonds before they can come in conscious action; and then, like a deep spring of water which has had a whole stratum of earth resting upon it, they leap up, as it were, in a single moment to the heavens. It is often the case, likewise, that they are developed in the soul to a very large extent before their possessor is brought into those peculiar circumstances, that knowledge of God and what religion is, which are needed to call them forth. The same thing is witnessed in the other departments of our nature. There is many a person whose intellectual faculties, so far as the great realm of abstract truth is concerned, are suffered to lie dormant to a late period of life; and then perhaps, under the influence of books, or a new set of companions, or new surroundings, are quickened all at once into the highest kind of activity. The child that is parted from its parents in infancy, though having all the inward capacity for filial affection developed, will remain unconscious of it, perhaps, as a real feeling, until they again meet; and then, most likely, will find it spring up in a single moment to the fullest life. The love which unites husband and wife, although the capacity for it may have existed long before, is obliged to wait for its development till in the changing scenes of life they are brought to each other's acquaintance; and then, it may be, is of instant growth. So with our love to God and interest in spiritual things: the capability of them may exist in our bosoms for long years as only a nameless yearning for some good, some truth, some object such as earth has never supplied; but at last, amid the changes of outward events, or under some calamity which stirs up the deep fountains of our nature, the Deity is presented to our minds as it were a new person; a beauty is seen in his character that never struck us before; the Eternal Father comes home to his child; the Spirit finds the bride it long has sought; and the flame of divine love breaks forth all at once full and strong in the soul.

And now, having got at its nature and mode, the question comes, What are the means by which this development is produced,—what is the cause of the new birth? There can be only one answer. The Saviour, the Bible, the Church, the Sunday school, the mother's teachings, and the thousand other channels of religious instruction, are doubtless the instruments and occasions; but the one great agency beyond and above all others is the Spirit of God. It is a universal law of the natural world that nothing will grow from the force merely of its own inward principle and without the help of some outside influence. The seed will sprout only when its germ is placed in the warmth and moisture of the ground. The animal, in order to thrive, must have the food and air of the world around it, as well as the vitality of its own being. And it matters not how vigorous the root of the tree may be, it is found to put forth its new leaves and branches only under the warm sunshine and the genial breath of spring. And the same law holds good in regard to our human growth. Each part of our being, apart from its inward vitality, must have some outside influence which is adapted especially to its own peculiar wants. Meat and drink are the stimulants which act on our bodily powers. The intellectual nature is called into action by its contact with the realm of knowledge and truth. The conscience is unfolded only so far as it is wrought upon by actions which embody the great principles of right and wrong. There would be no development of taste, without we had the sight and sound of beauty in the world around us. And now, coming to our spiritual nature, that part of our being which deals with God and the kingdom of heaven, how is it possible to explain its appearance without the agency of something which belongs especially to the spirit-world? Why, apart from the Bible and apart from the intuition of our own souls, the whole analogy of nature would teach us that the direct action of the Holy Spirit is necessary both in beginning and in carrying on this work of regeneration. The moment you admit that we have a spiritual principle, a department of our being which is distinct from intellect and the senses, you admit

that we must have a spiritual influence, an agency which is loftier than the objects of intellect and sense, to aid in its development. The argument of our Saviour on this point is absolutely conclusive, — “That which is flesh is born of the flesh, and that which is spirit is born of the spirit.” Books and preaching, truth and duty, may be the channels of God’s action, but they alone never can regenerate the soul: You might as well expect sunshine to develop the intellect, or food to feed the affections, as knowledge or morality to develop the spiritual nature. God has given to every part of our being its own means of quickening and field of action; and this field of the soul is the kingdom of heaven, and its only means of a new birth, the Spirit of God.

And this influence is something which is given always and everywhere in the greatest abundance. There is nothing about it, in any sense of the word, which is partial or arbitrary. Like the sunshine, it is poured down on all countries and all hearts. Like the wind, “it bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth;” but, like the wind also, it is never absent and never still. There is no time of night or day when it is not moving in mighty storm or zephyr sigh, — no place, unless it be the dungeon or the cell covered up from the open heaven, which is not blessed with its sweet breath and its dewy wings. There is nothing in all the universe, not the air we breathe, not food, not matter itself, which is so free, so abundant, so all-pervading as this richest of gifts. And if you and I have never felt its genial influence acting like the warmth of spring on our spiritual nature, it is because we have sealed up our sensibilities in a crust of sin, which only the action of our own wills and the fierce struggle of repentance is able to break down.

And this leads us to say still further that because our souls are created with a religious principle, and are surrounded so continually with the quickening power of the Holy Spirit, we are not by any means to suppose that the new birth will follow as a matter of course, independent of our own wills, and that we are to wait for God to do the work. The Holy

Spirit is the means, and not the agent of regeneration. The same great law holds good here that we find in all the rest of our nature, the need of direct personal effort to make use of what God has so richly provided. Our Heavenly Father has given us the atmosphere, yea, has poured it all around us; but we ourselves have got to breathe it. Food is provided for us throughout all the realm of nature, and we are made with teeth to chew and a stomach to digest it; but it rests entirely on ourselves as to whether we will reach forth and eat it, or lie down and starve. A person may be born in an enlightened community and with all the germs of the highest intellectual faculties, and yet, without his own exertions, will never grow up a scholar. So in religion, the food of the soul, the atmosphere of the Spirit, the everlasting truth, may be placed before us in the largest measure; but these alone are not enough. We have got to use them, got to open our hearts and take them in. Our personal employment of the Bible, the Church, the Sunday school, and the closet of prayer is just as imperative in the quickening of our spiritual nature as the use of books and schools is in the unfolding of our minds. The human will has got to act with the Spirit of God in making a Christian, for the same reason and on precisely the same principle that it has with the power of truth in making a scholar. And it is this which explains clearly those far-reaching words of Paul, so often considered a paradox, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do."

We believe, therefore, in spite of all our dependence on the Divine Spirit, the whole responsibility of regeneration must rest, not with nature or with God, but with our own free choice. It is we ourselves that are to say when and where and how it shall take place, we that are to resist and quench and neglect the Spirit, or receive and keep and use its everlasting might. There is no reason, no reason outside of himself, why every person who has passed through the period of childhood should not experience the new birth just as truly as the education of his mind. There is not a single

day in which the Spirit of God is not breathing around each one of our souls, just as much as the wind of heaven is around our bodies. And though undoubtedly there is the same difference in the constitutional strength of our spiritual capacities as there is in that of our minds and affections, yet, as every person is able to acquire enough of knowledge to perform the duties of this present life, and of love to make his house a home, so there is no one who is not endowed with enough of the spiritual capacity to enable him, with its proper culture, to see the kingdom of God.

Finally, we come to the results of the new birth. What does it do for us? what is the reason why all this stress is laid upon it? The answer is plain. It is the only thing that can make us directly conscious of the realities of the spirit-world. Christ declares in the most explicit terms, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The words are not "shall not," but "cannot." It is no arbitrary dictation that will prevent, but a natural impossibility, — no mighty wall that is to be reared before his vision either here or hereafter, but the want in his own soul of the seeing faculty. Of course, it is possible, even without this power to know some things about God and the spirit-world; possible, through the intellect and the heart, to learn of his existence, his wisdom, his love and his power; possible even, through the imagination and the logical faculty, to build up a vast system of theology about him. All this, however, is a second-hand knowledge, and not a direct vision of his kingdom. There is just the same difference between our intellectual and our spiritual knowledge of God as between reading the description of a country and beholding it with our own eyes. A person totally blind might learn by his sense of hearing many things about the sunshine and the landscape and the beauty of form and color, and all the thousand objects bathed and glorified with the world of light; but, oh, how meagre and slight must such a knowledge be in comparison with the wonders which would be revealed to him by one glance of his sight! So with our spiritual nature. It is the special faculty designed to give us the immediate knowledge of God

and the spirit-world. Each separate department of the universe is matched with its own window in the human soul through which alone it is able to be seen. The bodily senses are the organs by which we are brought in contact with the world of matter. The intellectual faculties reveal to us the realm of truth. It is by means of the æsthetic perception that we behold the world of beauty. We look through the conscience to see our moral relations. And in the strictest accordance with this same plan, it is the spiritual eyesight which opens into the kingdom of God, and without which there is no possibility of its being seen.

And we need it not only to see, but to enter the kingdom of God,—for our Saviour uses both forms of expression,—enter on a real experience of its joy and might. A person can have no happiness in religion as such till he has known what it is to be born again. Each faculty of our being is the avenue not only of its own peculiar knowledge, but of its own peculiar pleasure, a pleasure which, by our very constitution, we are able to enter upon through nothing else. Hence it follows, not as an arbitrary penalty which Divine mercy can remove, but as inevitable law which nothing but the fundamental alteration of our very nature can obviate, that, so far as this spiritual capacity is undeveloped, our whole being must be shut out from the realm of spiritual joy. We all know how it is with our earthly affections. The man and woman who are married for wealth and position and convenience, and without the ties of mutual love, may respect each other, and be good friends, and live together in mutual peace and respect. But they can have no taste of true domestic happiness, no special delight in each other's company, and between their doorsill and their hearthstone no corner of Paradise. And so with the soul which has been born into no affection for its God,—it may go to church, and support the gospel, and unite in prayer, and do its moral duties; but there is no rapture in its devotions, no thrill in its song of praise. The prayer-meeting is apt to be tedious; and hosannas languish on its tongue. It bows before, but does not enter into the kingdom of God. It is a law, too,

so far as we can see, which has no limit,—one that will apply to eternity just as truly as to time. Spiritual things always and everywhere must be spiritually discerned. Without regeneration we can know as little of God in the next state of being as we do in the present. It is the new birth of the soul, not the death of the body, which admits us and must admit us into the spirit-world. To “know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent,” this is eternal life, no matter when or where it takes place. And there is many a Christian, through the quickening of his spiritual capacities in the new birth, that has known what it is even here in this mortal state to see, yea, and to enter the kingdom of God.

The view of regeneration that we have thus tried to present is clear and simple. It does full justice both to the words of Scripture and to all the facts of religious experience. The great doctrines of our absolute dependence on God, and at the same time our own moral responsibility, are not only recognized by it, but brought into harmonious relations with each other. And more than all, it is practical, something on which we can act, something which opens a way for the enjoyment of it to every one of God’s children who himself will elect to have it.

It is a view, moreover, which brings out clearly and distinctly the relation of the new birth to all the other parts of our religious experience. It differs from repentance in being the consciousness, not of sin, but of God; from conversion in being, not a turning round and starting for the kingdom of heaven, but our entrance upon it; from a change of heart in being, not the transfer of our old affections and desires from the things of earth to those heaven, but the development of new ones; and from reformation in being, not a change in the character of our mortal life either inward or outward, but the beginning within us of the eternal life. And when we consider how unique and distinct it is; when we look at the new world into which it carries us, so different from that in which we are placed by all our other faculties; yea, and when we remember the agony and labor and struggle, the



travail, with which many a soul passes from the darkness of the flesh to the light and joy of the spirit, is there not a wonderful fitness, something beyond all chance use of words, in our Saviour's describing this mighty change as our being born again?

But better, infinitely better, than the reception of it as a doctrine, shall we not make it a practical faith? There is no other capacity of our nature, nothing in the philosopher's far-reaching thought, nothing in the orator's tongue of flame, nothing in the poet's winged fancy, which is so mighty and grand, which separates the soul so widely from the brute world around it, as this fact of a spirit within us. It opens for us, opens not to a favored few alone, but to every human being, a kingdom of glory such as the foot of no earthly prince, the mind of no intellectual giant, has ever trod. It shows us a world of wonder right around us ever new and fresh, such as no voyager over the seas has ever sailed to, or the astronomer's glass in its keenest vision, looking into the sun's white abyss, or scanning the faint, far light of the Pleiades, has been able to reach. There is nothing in wealth and honor and education, nothing in the loftiest culture of earth, which is able to lift us so high. It is the crowning gift of manhood. It is the last round in that mighty ladder which brings us to the vision of God. And no person has realized his grandest destiny, no one has trained himself to all of which his nature is capable, till he has opened his soul to the breath of the ever-waiting Spirit, till he has felt the deep thrill of eternal life within him, till he has known from his own experience what it is to be born again.

J. C. K.

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#### THE MEANING OF THE NAME "CHRISTIAN."\*

"And the disciples were called Christians."—Acts, ii. 26.

A NAME is designed as an indication of the qualities of the thing named, an expression of its nature. Although in hu-

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\* From the German of Professor P. Schaff.

man affairs, through the deceptive influence of sin, there is often no likeness or correspondence between the name and the thing itself, yet this contradiction does not exist in divine things. The names of Holy Writ, the book of truth, are highly significant. This is true of that name of the followers of our Lord and Saviour, the meaning of which we would now consider,—the name of "Christians." At first, they were known by other names, each of which denotes a particular side of their character and work. They called themselves *disciples*, or learners,—*i. e.*, of Jesus Christ, their divine Teacher, whom they should follow and obey; or *saints*, because they were separate from the service of the world and of sin, consecrated to the service of God, and called to unwearying striving after moral perfection; or *brethren*, because they formed one family of the redeemed, were of one spirit, one soul, and one body,—one in love among themselves, as they were one in faith with Christ.

The name "Christians" originated about the year 40 of our reckoning, in Antioch, the chief city of Syria, and headquarters of missions among the heathen. We are not told by whom the name was first given,—certainly not by the Jews, who did not regard the crucified Jesus as the Christ, the promised and expected Messiah, and were wont contemptuously to call his hated followers "Nazarenes" or "Galileans." Probably the name originated with the heathen population of the city, who, hearing the disciples say so much about the Christ, took this to be a proper name, and so called them "Christians," as the followers of a certain man named Christ; in like manner as one now speaks of Lutherans, Calvinists, Swedenborgians, &c. Nevertheless, the name did not originate by chance, but under the leading of Divine Providence, without whose will no hair falls from our head. In this case, the heathen of Antioch were prophets, like Balaam or Caiaphas, without knowing or willing it. They uttered a truth of which they themselves had no conception; for this name "Christian" is extremely significant, and a most fitting expression of what every confessor of Christ should be. Hence, in short time, it became generally adopted; and is

now the universal appellation of all those who have been baptized into Christ, and derive their salvation from him.

It is, therefore, of great practical importance for every one of us well to understand the meaning of the name "Christian," which we all bear, whatever branch of the Church we may otherwise belong to; and that we learn to know the glorious privileges and holy duties which this name involves.

In general, the name "Christian" denotes a confessor or follower of Christ,—one in whom the life of our Lord is continued, and who is, so to speak, a second Christ, and should become so more and more; of course, in a subordinate and derived sense, and in continual dependence on Him who is the captain of our salvation, the author and finisher of our faith. The word "Christ" is the name both of a *person* and of certain *offices* or works which that person fulfils. It is the name of a person who, in the Gospel, is usually called Jesus: it is also the designation of his offices as the Christ, or the anointed of God. It is by considering what Jesus was, both in his person and in his offices or works, that we may learn what a Christian is, or should *be* and *do*.

### I.

And, first, as it regards the person of Jesus Christ. There was in him the perfect and complete union of the divine and human nature, by means of which he became the mediator and reconciler between God and man,—the author of our redemption and of our communion with God. He was a true and perfect man. In the Gospels, he calls himself the Son of man, with a special preference for this name, in order to testify his condescension to us, his real fellowship with whatever is truly human, even with our sufferings, our weaknesses, and our frailties. He had body, soul, and spirit, as we have; was an infant on his mother's breast, an obedient boy, a youth, and man; and, as he grew in stature, grew also in wisdom, and in favor with God and man. He hungered and thirsted, ate and drank, waked and slept, was tried and tempted as we, but without ever for a single instant yielding to temptation; he suffered, died, and was buried; in short, in every thing, he

became like unto us, except in sin, the guilt of which he, as an innocent surety, a voluntary substitute, blotted out upon the cross. And, notwithstanding this humiliation and form of a servant, there was unfolded in him the highest flower and fruit of humanity. In him we see our nature redeemed, ennobled, glorified, perfected; in him every excellence of human nature shone forth in absolute perfection. Not only the sterner virtues of justice, firmness, courage, and truth, but also the milder virtues of gentleness, meekness, humility, forbearance, and love, were blended in one perfect human life. He is called the *Son of man* in this sense also, — that he is the ideal, perfect man; the second, the heavenly Adam; the representative of the new creation, the regenerate humanity.

On the other hand and just as often, especially by the apostles, he is called the *Son of God*, and that in an altogether extraordinary sense, as the only-begotten of the Father; who, from the beginning, was in the bosom of the Father; and whose glory, full of grace and truth, shone forth through the veil of his human nature. He is the Word, who from eternity was with God, and, in his essential nature, was God. In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily: he is God manifest in the flesh for our temporal and eternal salvation. Here is the great central mystery, the foundation-truth, of Christianity; here the depths which the angels desire to look into; here the exhaustless fountain of atonement, life, and blessedness for the creature needing and desiring redemption.

Now, what was thus realized in a perfect manner, in the person of Jesus Christ, should be repeated, so far as this is possible in a finite creature, in every Christian. We also, if we bear not in vain that holy name by which we are called, are, in a derived sense, *God-men*, and should become so more and more. The Lord took upon himself our nature, that, as Peter says, we might be made "partakers of the Divine nature." We are all *sons of men*, and shall always remain so. The gospel will in no way destroy our natural capacities and powers, but only redeem them from the dominion of sin, which, with poisonous influence, has pervaded a nature originally pure: the gospel will sanctify, elevate, and perfect it; so that the per-

fect Christian is at the same time a perfect man, and *vice versa*. But, in order that this may take place, the communication of a new life is necessary. Upon the natural birth of flesh and blood must follow a new birth from a divine seed; upon the old wild stock, which can only produce bad fruit, must be engrafted, by the heavenly Gardener, a noble branch, which shall gradually close up with the old, and produce only noble branches, flowers, and fruits, — that is to say, in other words, in order to have a part in Christ and his salvation, we must become sons of God, or — as the Scripture, in order to preserve inviolate the higher dignity, the peculiar and eternal Sonship, of Christ, more usually expresses it — children of God. We must be born again. He who is related to God only on the ground of nature, deserves not yet the name of Christian, but they only who have received Christ in their hearts, and are born of God by the creative power of the Holy Ghost. This new birth is nothing else and nothing less than the implanting of a divine, eternal life from the heavenly Father, even as natural generation is the transmission of the natural life of their parents into their child, a continuance of the same in a new being. The begotten ever shows the nature of him that begat: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." Therefore we must, by the power of the Holy Ghost, become partakers of the Divine nature in order to become the children of God. The Divine life of Christ must flow into us, — pervade, purify, and ennoble our natural life; so that we shall live and move and have our being in him, become of one heart and soul with him, living members of his body.

This is no exaggeration, but a scriptural presentation of an exceedingly precious truth, which offers to us, poor and feeble and unworthy children of men, the highest honor and most exalted dignity of which created nature is capable. We are not, indeed, in this sense, one with Christ, — that we cease to be finite creatures, or self-conscious individuals, and disappear in him, like drops of water in the sea; neither, on the other hand, are we so loosely connected with him that we simply honor him as the divine Founder of our religion, and ac-

cord with his teachings, as, for example, the Jews with Moses, and the Mohammedans with Mohammed. But the relation of Christians to Christ, as set forth in the Scriptures, is a real and most intimate communion of life. The Lord himself calls himself the vine, his people the branches, which consequently derive from him their life and power, and, separate from him, cease to live, and wither irrecoverably. He is life eternal; and whoso believes in him hath life, and whoso believes not hath not life. In the Judgment, the Saviour will regard himself in so close fellowship with his disciples, that he will set forth their sufferings and wants as his own sufferings and wants, and will say, "Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me." We are required to "eat the flesh of the Son of man, and to drink his blood," i.e., to take his life into us, if we would be his true disciples, and hereafter share in the blessedness of his resurrection. We are "members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones;" therefore such as are pervaded by his spirit, and ruled by his will. "Christ is my life," says the apostle: and again, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."—"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." When Paul says so often of Christians that they are "in Christ," he would denote that they are in him as the element of life: they have their whole spiritual subsistence in him, and are to fulfil all their duties in him.

How lofty and glorious is the calling which is set before us, when, as Christians, we consider our relation to the person of our Lord! Christ, the Son of God and Son of man, the Saviour of the world, the Lord of all, is not ashamed to call us brethren. And his beloved apostle assures us that "we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as he is." Let us in the dust adore him, and, at the same time, take shame to ourselves that we have so little regarded our Christian name, and so often have contradicted the same in thought, word, and deed. The relation of the Christian name to the person of Christ teaches us, that the whole life of the Christian should

be "holiness unto the Lord." As, in our Saviour, the human nature was ever in harmonious union with the divine; so, in ourselves, the Divine life received from Christ should elevate, purify, and sanctify in us whatever is truly human. In the Christian, there never should be any discord, or want of harmony, between the inclinations of his human nature and the requirements of the Divine nature of which he is a partaker. So it would be, if the religion of Christ were perfectly realized in the hearts and lives of his disciples. The Divine life received from him would mingle with their natural life, and give to their every thought and feeling, their every word and action, a holy and a sacred stamp. Their whole life would be religious, — *i.e.*, consecrated to God; their week-day work, as well as their sabbath-day worship. But, in order to realize this idea of practical Christianity, we must live in perpetual communion with Christ, that, beholding his glory, we may be transformed more and more into the same likeness.

## II.

If we now inquire, secondly, into the offices or work of Christ, in order to deduce therefrom the offices and work of a Christian, we shall find that the name "Christ" denotes that he is, in a perfect sense and manner, the *prophet*, *priest*, and *king* of all mankind. The Christ, or in the Hebrew language the Messiah, signifies the *anointed* of God, — gifted without measure with the Holy Ghost. Under the Old-Testament dispensation, prophets, priests, and kings were anointed with holy oil, and thereby set apart to the exclusive service of God, and qualified for the fulfilment of their sacred duties. These three offices and their functions were in the highest degree united in our Redeemer, and from him pass over in a subordinate manner upon all his disciples. Hence John speaks of the anointing which we have received of the Lord, and which abideth with us. Hence in the Heidelberg Catechism, to the 32d question, "Why art thou called a Christian?" the answer is, "Because by faith I am a member of Christ and partake of his anointing, that I may confess his name, present myself a living sacrifice to him, and with free conscience strive



against sin and the Devil in this life, and hereafter reign with him over all creatures for ever."

1. Christ is the highest prophet, because in his words and works he has perfectly declared to us the will and truth of God, so that we need not expect or desire any deeper revelations of Divine things than are already given us in him. Moses and the prophets testified of him; but he has gathered together in his own person all the scattered rays of preceding revelations; so that now, with far clearer brightness, they shine forth from him as from a central sun. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." He is the Light of the world, the Truth itself; and in him are hid all treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Man is made in the image of God, capable of knowing and making known the truth. In him the hidden meaning of Nature comes to consciousness: he is the interpreter of her mysteries, the mouth of her dumb wonders; he is raised above Nature, and, by means of conscience and the innate consciousness of God, is able to soar upward to the contemplation of the Creator and Preserver of all things. But this original light of Paradise has become obscured by apostasy from God; man has fallen into a life of nature, and although, in his fallen state, here and there isolated rays of higher knowledge break through the darkness of sin, and he can never deny the Divine original, yet these are only a feeble glimmering,—a twinkling of a star in the blackness of midnight. By separation from the primal Source of all-truth, he has lost the true knowledge of himself, of the world, and of God; and the divine image is broken and shattered. Only Christ restores the same, and brings it perfectly to view on every side.

The new man, or the Christian, in the proper sense of the word, is a prophet, a light of truth. He is enlightened by the Holy Ghost,—has been led to see himself in his sinful estate and infinite necessities; to know God in his power, glory, righteousness, love, and grace, and Jesus Christ as the only ground of salvation,—the way, the truth, and the life. In this knowledge he is daily to grow, penetrate deeper and

deeper into the mysteries of the word of God, advance from one degree of clearness unto another, until he shall see face to face, and know as he is known. But this is not enough. As a prophet, he must not, he cannot, keep selfishly to himself these treasures of wisdom which make man wise unto eternal life, but, after the example of Christ, is to give them forth for the good of the world; let his light shine before men; and joyfully, in word and deed, confess his Divine Master before old and young, rich and poor, high and low. "Whoso confesseth me before men, him will I also confess before my Father in heaven; but whoso denieth me before men, him will I also deny before my Father in heaven." This is not said to those alone who are called in a special sense to be public teachers of the Word, but to all Christians. "I am the light of the world," Christ said of himself. "Ye are the light of the world," said he of his disciples; and all who bear his name are to shine as lights in the world, by their word and life diffusing a knowledge of righteousness and truth in the community in which they live. As they are all taught of God, so should they all, each in his sphere and according to the gifts and opportunities granted him, bring all around him — children and parents, brothers and sisters, friends and foes — to the same fountain of truth and of life.

2. Christ is the true High Priest, — *i.e.*, the only Mediator between God and man; who gave himself wholly to God and man, and, by his perfect sacrifice, offered once for all, obtained eternal deliverance for us, and, by his perpetual intercession, takes our place before the throne of God, so that the arrows of divine justice do not strike us; but God, for his Son's sake and in Christ his Son, turns upon us his reconciled face, and receives us as his children, and as heirs of eternal life.

In this, also, Christians are like unto their Redeemer, and continue his priestly office on earth. In a state of innocence, man was already a priest, and stood as a mediator between heaven and earth, not only lisping his own prayer and praise, but, in behalf of all nature, shaping her manifold life as a thank-offering upon the altar of the Most High, whom the

birds of the air, the fish of the sea, — yea, even the worm of the dust, — through the mediation of the human consciousness, worshipped and adored.

This priestly dignity of the first Adam, despoiled by sin, was, by the second Adam, far more gloriously restored, and for the first time realized perfectly. True, we are no mediators or priests in the sense that we make atonement with God, either for ourselves or others. This work and this honor belong to Christ alone. But he will use us as instruments to introduce his atoning work, that is finished once for all, into the consciousness of men, and spread its blessings ever farther and farther. We should all be priests in this sense, — that we, like our Lord, should offer ourselves unconditionally, with all that we have and are, to the service of God and the good of man. We have no right to live, our earthly existence has no reasonable meaning or purpose, except as we live to the glory of God and the advancement of his Church. This is man's highest honor and only glory: every thing else is mere tinsel, and leads to destruction. Only as we follow this exalted aim have we any thing of that true piety and morality which will avail before the tribunal of our eternal Judge. In self-love, and a selfish serving of the world, consists the very essence of sin. The unconditional surrender of heart and will to God, disinterested love to God and man, is true godliness and virtue, — the fulfilling of the law and the prophets, the sum of practical Christianity. "Ye are," says Peter, "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people," — *i.e.*, a people belonging unto the Lord; his property; "that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." Praise and thanksgiving for all God's gifts and benefits; prayer and intercession for all classes and wants of men; the giving of our property and service, heart and lip, body and soul, — these are the acceptable offerings which we daily and hourly should bring unto God and his people. This is the Christian's reasonable service, his purest joy, his unspeakable gain. Whoso seeketh his life for his own sake shall lose it; whoso loseth his life for God's sake and for the Church shall find it again, glorified, sanctified, and infinitely more valuable than before.

3. Lastly, Christ is King of that spiritual kingdom which embraces heaven and earth, and shall endure for ever. "I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion," God said of his anointed Son. Even in respect to his human nature, he was sprung of royal blood, — a branch of the chosen stem of Jesse. "Thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel," was the salutation of Nathanael, on his first acquaintance with Jesus. This royal dignity shone forth even in the midst of his deepest humiliation; and the heathen governor was an involuntary witness of its truth when he set the inscription upon the cross, in the three principal languages of the world at that time, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Yet not of the Jews alone. On his departure from the earth, he said, "All power is given me, both in heaven and in earth;" and now he sits at the right hand of the Father Almighty, "far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in the world, but also in that which is to come." His name is "King of kings, and Lord of lords."

As the prophetic and priestly, so also is the kingly, office an essential element of the divine image in us. The upright form, the proud brow, the flashing eye, — still more, the lofty spirit and commanding will, — announce man's royal lineage and rank. He is the crown of the creation, the lord of nature, the representative of God on earth. Therefore to our first parents in Paradise was given dominion over this world, over the fish in the sea, and over the fowl of the air and the beasts of the field. "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hand," — so cries the Psalmist, full of humble amazement; and, in prophetic outlook to the perfect realization of this kingly dignity, the completion of this purpose of the original creation through Christ, "Thou hast put all things under his feet."

How low is man cast down from this exalted position! — he, the born son of the King; a miserable slave of sin, of the world, and of Satan; a plaything of his own impure lusts and passions, which, in spite of all outward splendor of wealth and honor that may surround him, not unfrequently degrade

him beneath the irrational cattle. What a shame, what disgrace, for an immortal spirit, the masterpiece of creative workmanship! True, here and there, in the midst of his degradation, break forth some tokens of his royal worth and power: he shows his supremacy over nature by numerous arts and inventions, which make the hidden treasures of earth subservient to his comfort and welfare. In the midst of his deepest fall, in the extreme misery of his bondage to sin, there still remains to him a painful remembrance of the palace he has left, of the diadem which once he wore, the glory which surrounded him; and there is a longing, a homesickness, for the Father's house, and the possession of the Paradise lost. But he is too weak to break the chains which he himself hath forged; to tear himself away from that ignominious service to which, in terrible infatuation, he has sold himself.

By Christ alone are we redeemed from the dominion of sin and of Satan. Whom the Son makes free, he is free indeed; and he who has not this freedom remains a slave, though his chains be of gold. Christ, the King of the kingdom of heaven, — which, though not *of* this world, is yet *in* this world, — has, by his death and glorious resurrection, obtained for us far greater honor and worth than we lost in Adam, and "made us kings and priests unto God and his Father." For whoever enters into living communion with the divine person of Jesus shares also in his kingly majesty and dominion. This kingly character the Christian should prove and show forth by the complete subjection of his evil lusts and desires, whose slave he by nature is, by a victorious conflict against his own flesh and blood, — against the allurements of the world and the assaults of the Devil. "Let not sin reign in your mortal bodies, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." The apostle also summons us to a contest against "principalities and powers which rule in the darkness of this world, — against spiritual wickedness in high places." The servant who conquers his passions, and has learned in the school of Christ the great art of self-government, is freer and stronger than the richest prince or military conqueror who is a slave to himself. But

this royal throne can be reached only through conflict. As Christ entered into glory only through sufferings,—as only through bitter conflict he attained to eternal victory over sin, death, and hell; so only, in the same way, does the Christian attain to the same glorious throne. Here his royal dignity is for the most part hidden from the eyes of the world; but when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we also shall be clothed with his glory. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him."—"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am sat down with my Father in his throne."

If now, at the conclusion of our meditation upon the meaning of the Christian name, we seek to draw some practical inferences from it,—which, however, we can only briefly indicate,—first of all, it may well humble and shame us that we come so very far short of that moral elevation and glory to which the grace of God has called us, and which our holy name makes it our sacred duty most earnestly to strive to obtain. But, if we are honest in the purpose to secure the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, and thoroughly repent for our deficiencies and faults, then our name as Christians may and should serve for our consolation, our encouragement, and ever-increasing zeal in the way of holiness. There is and can be nothing more exalted and glorious than the destiny which Christianity holds out before us; and that of itself alone is sufficient to prove it to be the only true and perfect religion. We poor sinners, worms of the dust, are, through Christ and by grace alone, called to the highest honor and dignity of which any creature is capable. Our destiny seems to go beyond that of the angels; for the Son of God took not on him the nature of angels, but of man, and for ever united our nature with his own Divine nature. Here is open to every child of man the grandest prospect, a career, a crown, which far surpasses the splendor and glory of the statesman, the general, the scholar, or the artist; and is open to the poorest and feeblest, through faith in Jesus Christ our Lord. Let us bow before him, and on our knees give thanks for such unspeakable grace; and, with all our powers, early

and late, by day and by night, at home and abroad, in joy and in sorrow, on the sabbath and on every day, strive to be, in thought, word, and deed, what our name as Christians imports. Let us be holy unto the Lord; lights in the world; offering perpetual sacrifices of love and self-denying obedience, and rejoicing evermore in the kingdom of our God and our Saviour, to whom be glory for ever. E. R.

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### THOUGHTS THAT BURN.

"While I was musing, the fire burned."

THE sun had vanished in his vesper path,  
And tides of twilight, streaming in the room,  
With shadows, softened into gentle gloom,  
Mixed with the flickers of the evening hearth,  
And thought to gentle meditation turned;  
For I was musing, while the fire burned!

The thronging fancies, a bewildered train  
Of sable vesture, in soft reverie came,  
And aspiration of the soul aflame,  
The gloom and glow reflecting in the brain;  
For spirit-passion in its power returned,  
While I was musing, and the fire burned!

In meditation, the refiner's fire  
Made worldliness its fuel, and the aim  
Of earthly hope and temporal desire  
Consumed away in slow and silent flame.  
While I was musing, purer passion yearned  
With quenchless fervor, and the fire burned.

Thus, on the altar of self-sacrifice,  
The grosser nature contemplation lays,  
From ashes as a phoenix fain to rise,  
Soaring, with fire unseen, celestial ways,  
Thought with the hearth-glow to the heaven turned;  
For I was musing while the fire burned.



The sacred ardor of a soul sincere  
Makes earth its fuel for the heavenly ray,  
And blazing brightly with a beacon-cheer,  
The coarser tissue to consume away ;  
For, while we sweetly muse, devotion yearns,  
And, fanned by breath divine, the fire burns.

R. F. F.

## THE GREAT FIRE IN PORTLAND, JULY 4, 1866.

"Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth !"

WHAT we call accidents are also providences. The hand of man, a careless or a wicked hand it may be, is in them, yet also the hand of God,—a hand always wise and loving. There is something to be said about accidents in holy places, as well as in the newsrooms and the insurance-offices. We are told in the story of Job, that, when all the waves and billows of all the ocean seemed to have gone over that sorely afflicted man, he worshipped ; and surely he was right. The whole had not been told in that sad case when they had spoken of the Sabeian and Chaldean raids, and of the lightning and tornado. So the whole has not been told when the newspapers have reported that a third of one of our fairest New-England cities lies in ashes,—the blackened chimneys rising from the ruins like the charred trunks of the trees in the Maine clearing from which the city sprang in the beginning ; whilst we read that a careless child, in the haste of a festal day, wrought the mischief. Carelessness it was indeed ; and yet, careless or careful, we are in the domain of God. It belongs to his matchless skill to turn our foolishness and improvidence to a good account ; and it is one of the amazing things in this world, how all events are made to serve the wise and loving Divine Will. Doubt not, says Faith, the all-sufficiency of God. There is no antagonism between the natural and the supernatural view of life. The fire of lightning may be no more the fire of God to us than any other fire. Like all other heat, it may be a form of motion, burning

according to law; and yet the almighty and ever-gracious Person knows how to use his own forces, even when they seem not to confess his control. One of our gifted and eloquent lecturers is disposed to raise a smile at the old New-England fashion of an "improvement" for every occasion, — for the tempest, the comet, the cankerworm. It is a fashion older than the date of the settlement of New England. So the Hebrew prophets preached when war and pestilence, famine, locusts, and hail, ravaged and consumed the people and the people's substance. So we write now, "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!"

A little fire! — the little foot of the little child whose little hand sowed the spark might have stamped it out. "Woe unto the nation," it was said, "whose king is a child!" Perhaps the destruction of a large part of one of our most beautiful cities may serve to impress, upon even the free American mind, the necessity of restraining the young from the entertainment of throwing about small firebrands, even on festive occasions. It is not so strange, that a part of one of our cities should have been destroyed, as that all of our cities are not destroyed. And there is a great deal of this yielding where we ought to rule, and, in all ways, a neglect of little things, and tempting of Providence. The fires that burn cities, mind, body, and estate, begin as sparks, easily controlled. That is our hour, and we can have things all our own way, with scarcely more than the lifting of foot or hand: but, presently, the great elemental forces, before which man is well-nigh impotent, begin to play their terrible part, and the problem is to put out your fire; and the wind fans it, and the water will not flow to it. There is no necessity, in the nature of things, for great conflagrations, for burnt districts, material or moral; at least, far more can be done than is done to prevent mischief which it is so hard to remedy. We need nothing, next to Christianity, so much as a little more wholesome restraint. Society is ever fighting an unequal fight with giants that were once babes, cowed by faces that once looked up in docility; and, if it is only the souls and bodies of men that are burning in the flames of passion,

looks quietly on until the thing grows absolutely intolerable. Crush out the sparks. Do not mistake for liberty the license which insists upon kindling and scattering them.

"Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" The mischief is done. The caution is good only for the future. The world is slow to learn its lessons; but the wisdom will come before the heavens shall be rolled up, and the elements dissolved. Meanwhile, there are many compensations, and there is much to be learned, in the day of calamity. God takes the accident and makes it a providence, and pervades and possesses it with a spirit of truth. It has been noticed, how, in times past, great conflagrations have proved great blessings to overcrowded cities, — opening the foul den to the light and air; destroying the wretched tenement which only a reckless, godless covetousness preserved; and making way for new and better homes and marts. Fires have prevented plagues, and, by wasting property, have saved more precious lives; and it is amazing how much sweet air and the blessed sunlight have to do with morals. The sunbeams are better than the best police. But the purifying fire was not needed in that comparatively virgin city. We must look in other directions for the great matter of good which the wise Disposer ever binds up with great misfortunes. How much besides human misery comes out before your eyes in the light of a great conflagration! We see, indeed, not a little to sadden and depress, — chiefly the mean and detestable acts, which show, alas! how far some of our race have fallen from their high estate, — not a little to qualify any rose-colored views of human nature: wagon-loads of plunder moving away from the scene of desolation; an incursion of thieves from other cities apprehended. Let us not too speedily reach the conclusion that there is no hell. And yet even such fiends of our earth are capable, or at least were capable, of better things. But, thank God! this is the least part of what meets our eyes. A great conflagration always raises one's opinion of human nature, — we will not say, if any insist upon the distinction, of human *character*, but of human nature. Those men who are mounting those ladders and scaling those walls,

at the peril of life and limb, have far less at stake than most of us : but, when there is really something to be done and something to be suffered, God helps men to forget themselves ; to cast themselves upon him ; unconsciously, and yet perhaps all the more really and intensely, acting the prayer which they have no time to utter in words, and, by their plain contempt for this life when it is set in contrast with some great human need, witnessing for their secret persuasion of a life to come. There are heroes whose stories never get told, whose names never get recorded, of whom the world is not worthy. Not all loss is it, though the accumulations of years are crumbling into ashes, when the true glory of our manhood is thereby revealed.

And, every way where there is life, it comes into the light more manifestly and more wondrously than ever in circumstances that are outwardly discouraging. Life is irrepressible. Some persons see more without eyes than others see with them. Observers note, in times of great calamity, a singular exhilaration in the unfortunate, — a light in their faces which is not the light of excitement or madness. It tells of an unconquered and undismayed spirit ; it reveals the persuasion of unbounded resource, of an essential and substantial force, which is sure to manifest itself and finish its God-given work. "Thy feet shall be iron and brass," ran the old prophecy. Thou shalt be equal to any extremity, able to convert disasters into opportunities ; to change the wood, which must decay if it is not consumed, into granite and marble : and, "according to thy day, so shall thy strength be." A living man, a living community, will live through every thing. No matter, the Lord seems to say, what befalls them, prosperity is good, adversity is better ; and, if you lose the home or the village, you shall presently have a palace or a city in their stead. Providence betrays what seems like an unconcern about fortune and misfortune, encouraging care and painstaking, but not carefulness or anxiety ; assuring us, that, if we will only keep will alive, we shall always have a place to live in, and something to live upon. The men who only know how to live luxuriously, in cities which their fathers builded, may well

tremble before the destruction which wasteth at noonday; but the men that, with the blessing of God, build cities, know that the fires cannot consume the faith and hope of the wise builder's heart. Confidence, courage, perseverance, a persuasion of better things in store, more than relieve the day of calamity: rays of beauty and comfort blend with the lurid glare. And, since the men, and not the houses or the warehouses, are the city, we say it is safe: like the vigorous tree, pruning shall only increase its luxuriance and its fruitfulness.

And let it be noted how the sense of human responsibility, and the desire to sympathize with and relieve distress, find here their grand occasions. If man were naturally, as some harsh and crabbed philosophers have asserted, a foe to man, what an opportunity now for the selfish to make capital of a sore misfortune! If he were simply indifferent to suffering, but eager only for gain, the way would be open for a relentless traffic, limited only by the poverty of the consumer; but, from every quarter, free gifts have gone forward so abundantly, that of food, we are told, there is already no lack. The accident becomes a providence, because it stirs and stimulates benevolence; warms hearts which, perhaps, were growing cold; opens hands that, perhaps, were tightening upon the dearly loved gold; helps to perfect in work some very incomplete faith; gives a multitude something besides summer recreations to fill up their hours withal. It need not be said, Let this blessed giving go on; as in contributing food, so in other and more abiding ways. That was a holy custom of the old Christian communities, to send their alms from city to city as the tidings came of need more than common. As churches parted doctrinally, they said, in parting, "Only remember the poor." That makes a Christendom one and undivided and resplendent, better than common creed or ritual. That makes the city a sister city indeed; and they who give are more blessed than they who receive.

"Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" A little child's hand, so it is said, once saved the Netherlands from a return to the great sea whence they were taken.

Even the least may work great good as well as great harm. Huge disasters spring from trifling infidelities; and so, when humble duties are no longer neglected, the record of calamity will grow less and less. We do not want anxiety, or what the Bible calls carefulness; for, "except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." We do want care and healthful discipline and a governing hand; and to be so full to overflowing of a noble life, that the day of adversity shall ever find us brave for our own occasions, and eager to distribute for the necessities of others. May God raise up many and efficient counsellors and helpers for those who were once citizens of this Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and are now generous rivals and fellow-workers in all the noble enterprises of a Christian civilization, that they may pass through their day of trial with a confiding courage, and receive, in the end, a hundred-fold for all that has been taken; that, as it was with the patriarch of Uz, and with every really living man the world over, the Lord may bless the latter end more than the beginning!

E.

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#### GROUNDS OF FAITH.

It can hardly demand argumentation, that the character of Christianity, and the character of Christ as its founder, are so completely one, that what attaches to one, either to support or invalidate, surely attaches to the other in equal degree. Christianity, as a system, must involve and express just what Christ, as a person, involved and exemplified in his life and teachings,—no more and no less. Hence, whatever tends to defame Christ, equally tends to defame the system of principles which he founded.

We now premise, that Christianity, as represented by Christ, is the revelation of the life of God in human nature; and thus the full verification of all he constantly claimed during his earthly career, and infinitely transcending all ethical and moral systems besides. If it is not this, Christ

was either a vile pretender, or a deluded fanatic; in which case, of course, his professed followers must rank accordingly.

If we establish our main premises, that the Christ was, in an especial manner, the exposition of the Divine Life in human nature, and thus the full, natural expression of the Father's glory, as he claimed, — then, we claim, that he is infallible authority, and, as such, constitutes the only valid foundation of the Christian Church; upon which foundation alone can any man build, and build securely. It is because of the growing tendency, amongst professed Christians themselves, to build upon any and every foundation but Christ, that we feel called upon to expose such fatal inconsistencies; and to exhibit the Christ as the only valid base, in accordance with his constant claims during his career on earth. It is because Christian professors themselves hold Christianity to consist of moral sentiment rather than of a Divine Human Life, and thereupon overhaul the musty records of the heathen world to find there moral injunctions and insipid platitudes, which they parade as identical with, and far ante-dating, the moral precepts of Christ, — thus seeming to displace, or at least to belittle, Christ as a teacher, — that we are impelled to try to expose such mischievous and most absurd follies. It is clear that such gross inconsistencies on the part of nominal Christians proceed mainly from the fundamental misconception of holding Christianity to be a system of morals, or an attempt at a new ethical code, rather than the potent embodiment of a new order of life in human nature, by which henceforth that nature was to be operated upon a new and divine principle. Hence, when they find the sages and philosophers of the distant ages, before Christ, uttering *sentiments* and proclaiming *moral injunctions* similar to, or identical with, those of the Christian Gospels, they exultingly parade them as proof, that, after all, the Christian system is only slightly, if at all, different. Impelled by this dreadful fallacy, it is becoming quite common for preachers of "the liberal sects" to preach Confucius and Socrates instead of Christ, and to argue the Persian Zendavestas as quite equal to Christian Gospels. No



intelligent Christian can feel any aversion to a canvassing of merits of the different religions. The clear-headed Christian disciple sees that his Master has nothing to fear either from Brahmin, Buddhist, or Mahometan; nor even from the pompous pretensions of the crazy *ghostology* of our own day and nation, which claims to be a new and greater revelation. Still, he will insist, that whoever assumes to represent his Master's cause in relation with these shall not exhibit a flatulent caricature, naming the *thing* Christianity; and, finding it only equal or slightly superior, assuming or leaving the unavoidable inference, that, after all, Christianity is quite unimportant in human experience; and the rapturous shouts from angel-choirs, heralding the Saviour's advent as the fulfilment of prophecy and the joy of the world, was, consequently, only supermundane gasconade.

If the Light of the Prophets and the Life of the Christ were not of supreme moment to human interests, then the Scriptural record, which sets them forth in such unmistakable terms of transcendent glory, is the mere ebullition of over-excited brains; as such, unworthy rational regard, and unfit to be held as embodying principles and truths essential to our highest interests. And the somewhat prevalent habit of denying that Light, and defaming that Life, by professed Christian theologians who *mouth* the Scriptural record and repudiate it in the same breath, exhibits an inconsistency that might easily pass for gross hypocrisy.

In order to promote a good understanding in the end, let us now try to determine more distinctly what are the claims of Christ as a sovereign power of life, and therefore a Divine Authority of momentous significance to all.

Christ invariably claims to be sovereign authority, *as the Son of God*; exclusively, because of oneness with the Father; with wisdom to know, and with power and inclination to do, his will. If this claim be good, — this claim of perfect oneness with the Father, — it follows that his authority is God's authority, and therefore supreme. If the claim is only a fiction, then, inasmuch as truth is sublime and falsehood hateful, let us repudiate Christianity at once, and no longer profess to believe or teach in the Christ's name.

Let us turn for a few moments to the record, which, so long as even nominally held to be the testimony and text of Christian truth and teaching, must be regarded as involving realities essential to human well-being.

Christ says, "I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." "I and my Father are one." "He that seeth me seeth him that sent me." "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." "The words I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." "I do nothing of myself; but, as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things." "The Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him." "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me."

Surely, we need not multiply such explicit declarations (which we might do to great extent) to prove that Christ is divinely-appointed *authority* unto men,—at least if God himself is acknowledged as authority; for, unless he (Christ) was the greatest impostor or the most deluded fanatic the world ever saw, he is certainly thus divinely commissioned and empowered. And, of all the strange anomalies, that of the professed disciple and teacher repudiating Christ as absolute and complete authority is the strangest. It is practically to repudiate the whole Christian claim, and also the Scripture-record that utters it.

"I am the light of the world." "I am the way and the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." Surely, these are potent and pregnant words to the rational Christian mind; and will no more permit him to play the Christian *rôle* without Christ, than a faithful rendering of "Hamlet" will permit the dramatist to omit the part of Hamlet. It may be that the popular theologic rendering of the truths of the Christian Gospels is repulsive to the best instincts of the heart, and at variance with the soundest convictions of the head: must we, then, in discarding the rendering, reject the very truth itself? No greater

misfortune can befall us than thus to do. The literal Gospels are surely full of the most precious goods, both to the heart and the head; but they hold these goods as the nutshell holds its meat, — only to be conferred when, through devoted trust and patient endeavor, the resistant shell yields, and unbosoms its hidden treasures. A thousand pitiful heart-throbs for the famishing soul, that — because the old theology munches the astringent husk, declaring it pleasant to the taste and full of nutrition, and demands acknowledgments accordingly — disgustingly flings it away, as devoid both of agreeable taste and nutrient properties for it; and thereby thrusts away the precious food, for want of which it pines and faints by the way. The remedy is surely Christ. He it is that alone can rend the veil, and expose to the rational vision the great treasure otherwise eternally obscure. A rational doctrine of the Lord and his Christ, clearly apprehended, banishes alike all falsities and all mysteries: hence, the Christian gospel, well understood, will be found a charming vesture of the most precious truths; which, instead of trying to circumvent, we will delight to emphasize more constantly and completely. Unfaltering faith, without sight, is the indispensable prelude to glorious vision. He will appear, without sin unto salvation, *to those who look for his coming*. The husbandman, that, because the seed is buried out of sight, gets faithless of its vitality, and tramps it down in his careless wandering, will never realize the blessed harvest. Blind stragglers amongst the tombs, the sick, halt, and distressed, may all be restored by simple touch and word, if first conscious of their need, and faithful in trust of the healing potency.

God without Christ is an abstraction; only, in a measure, appreciable by the eye of faith. “God *in* Christ, reconciling the world unto himself,” is the Divinity manifest to the open vision; and surely there is no other name given as the term of salvation to perishing humanity. But why do we utter thus these familiar phrases and constant declarations of the word? Surely, not as unmeaning cant to win the stolid gaze of the multitude, but because we are sure they are all

laden with that which is of priceless worth to the soul, *capable of rational exposition*, and therefore adapted to the wants of the head as well as the heart.

What, then, is a rational doctrine of the Lord, that, while exhibiting the absolute divine authority of the Christ as Immanuel, does not subjugate and despoil the creaturely soul; but, on the contrary, makes that authority the central principle of his freedom and the source of his bliss?

There is no argument necessary to show, that human nature, in and of itself, independent of the creative efficacy, is gross and impotent in the extreme. It being conceded that the creature can become fully uttered as creature only by the creative potency, — so uttered that the creature realizes fulness of life in unlimited dependence in a way to violate no consciousness of individual freedom, — it is evident that this condition can only be attained through the vital union of the two terms in one new creature, involving in himself human-divine and divine-human. It is only, then, by the Creator's becoming interior to, or imbedded in, the creaturely nature itself, — ceasing thus to operate it as an arbitrary, external force, and inspiring it henceforth as an *interior* power of life, — that the creature's freedom and consequent fulness can be constantly realized, and still the Creator be known as perpetual and only authority. Creator and creature being naturally, or by the only terms that can confer *individual* consciousness upon the creature, opposite terms; and the creaturely consciousness being, in order to realize a sense of being as imaging the creative perfection, under the necessity of *feeling* a fulness of life, or perfect individual freedom, — it is evident that the two must become perfectly allied; the supreme, interior to the subject, making its constant inspiration, and yet making it a form of freedom, and so violating nothing of the true individual consciousness. Thus Christ, as authority, can never violate individual freedom: on the contrary, as the manifest and potent divine in human nature itself, he is the only source of that freedom, its only possible base of perfect realization. The Christ of God being thus the only term of creative perfection, it is

clear that the creature must realize the Christ, the divine in the human, as its constant vitality, in order to realize the salvation that is solely in, and of, this all-suffering presence.

Thus, the Lord, in broadest sense, is the Divine Natural Man; the man who becomes inwardly inspired to right-doing or righteousness, from a law of right written upon the heart, or centred in the affections. Life, running thus, is a ceaseless inspiration of the living God; and the leaping delights of such vitality constitute his manifest form in creation,—the revelation of his infinite perfection in human nature. Hence, all mere moral activity, proceeding from a sense of duty as conforming to a principle of right, as founded in the reason and conscience, falls infinitely below the Christian standard, which recognizes no act, however seemingly beneficial, as of intrinsic worth, unless it proceed from divine love within, making it gracious in the *free grace* of the Christ as the indwelling law of the heart.

Through the matchless and adorable service of the lowly Jesus in living down and completely subjecting all the vain and turbulent motions of the carnal nature, in order to bring it thus into living conjunction with the divine love, human nature to-day is instinct with this life of spontaneity: hence, it hates, and struggles to escape from, the servile and arbitrary; and yearns evermore for the delightful realm of God's perfect freedom. Thus, Christianity essentially involves a *divine order of LIFE*, in the crisp of whose blaze mere sentimentalism and moralistic injunctions shrivel and shrink into impalpable cinders, and fly away. Professed Christians, who conceive it to be a batch of beneficent sentimentality and well-packed morals merely, and so pit it against the wise sayings and clever doings of heathendom in competitive strife of doubtful issues, to them at least, ought to renounce their profession at once. To such, Christ can be no light, nor absolute authority: hence, they must be continually plunging hither and thither in the world's great cauldron of seething opinions; and it is utterly absurd for them to profess, even, to "walk in the Light,"—that being but dark-

ness, in such circumstances. But, to the clear-headed and full-hearted Christian disciple, Christ is literally "the way, the truth, and the life." To such, he is not simply the greater teacher, and therefore an exponent of the truth in greater measure; but is the veritable Messiah, Prophet of the Highest, and Immanuel; and, as such, involves the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

Unless we foolishly regard the creature as all-sufficient in himself; and the Creator as, at best, a kind of ornamental supernumerary serving only the insipid pantomime of *habitual* sabbath-exercises, — we are bound to accept him as an infinite, immortal life, livingly manifest through his Son, and thereby communicated, in a way to exalt the creature himself to his own intimate presence and supreme joys, in a freedom so real as to seem absolute. If we regard the selfhood, or freedom, of the creature to be underived, or independent of the creative efficacy, we thereby make the creature a god, and so deny the one only Being and Source of all. The truth, of God as Creator, and man as creature, involves the subjective relation of the creature; and the sublime glory of the Christian order is, that it realizes creative object and creaturely subject in one perfect form that fills the creature with the free grace of immortal life, and, at the same time, glorifies the Creator. This is the great and eternal reality fulfilled in the Christ. And it was not thus achieved to him, for ever aloof from man, as the solitary and unapproachable Divine-Human; but it was an at-one-ment of divine and human, made "once for all," which communicated to, and fixed in, the otherwise helpless creature, a new power of life in his lowest nature that assures its eternal conjunction with Heaven's infinite delights. Are, then, the Christ of God, and his gospel, of trifling import to man; to be hawked about in the world's great market-place, and offered in exchange for the vain babblings and insane rituals of heathendom? Oh, let the Christian soldiery beware how they rudely part the sacred vesture, and cast lots for the seamless robe; for these very externals themselves will surely be put on, and glorified anew, at His final coming!

W. H. K.

## RANDOM READINGS.

## CRITICISM AND CONTROVERSY.

THE New-York "Christian Inquirer," which generally means to be candid and genial, and which has a decided leaning towards the radical side, characterizes our letter in answer to Mr. Wasson, as "acrid" and "sarcastic," and so forth. We are amazed at this, since, after a preliminary disposition of all personal matters, such as we thought frankness required, we conceded all good motives to Mr. Wasson, and put all personal matters behind us with an eye single to the argument itself.

In shaping our argument, we had reference quite as much to the attack made upon us by the "Christian Inquirer" itself as to Mr. Wasson. Some months since, it volunteered two columns of personal abuse and gross misrepresentation of us, which we laughed over at the time, but whose perversions and misstatements we recalled and answered in the course of the discussion, though in a perfectly impersonal way; and the result is, the "Christian Inquirer," forgetting its own unprovoked personalities, lifts up holy hands of deprecation. You may call a man bad names, such as "word-monger" and "Thug;" you may charge him with want of seriousness, destroying the faith, and so on, as the "Christian Inquirer" has done; but, the moment he proves the falsity of your charges, controversy becomes a very bad thing. Tastes differ; and editors, as preachers, must not aim at pleasing everybody. Some excellent brethren have thanked us for our word, and among others comes a letter from a stranger to us, away off West, who confesses he had abused us for want of explicitness, but now commends us for speaking out. The letter is long, and discusses ably some of the themes we touched upon; and, though private, we venture in this connection on one or two extracts.

"REV. AND DEAR SIR,—This time I will act upon impulse. I have risen from reading two articles in the 'Monthly Religious Magazine' for July. After reading the first,—your letter to Mr. Wasson,—I hesitated about reading the second,—the poem called, 'Bureka.' I questioned whether my impression of your letter would not be marred and spoiled; but I read the poem, and it proved a beautiful, harmonious close to my



morning reading. See! the earnest search and demand for the Christ, the Light of the world, which gives your letter such manly nerve, has fitly uttered its Eureka in the beautiful poem which follows. . . . It would have pleased *me* better had you gone farther,—had you declared what more there is in our Lord and Saviour than the good ‘metaphysician;’ but I did not take up my pen to tell you what I did, not like, or rather what more I would have liked, but to tell you how much I found to rejoice in and to be thankful for, that you have written it; that the ‘Religious Magazine’ contains it; and many will read it, and have their hearts and minds fixed more firmly on the Lord, and the saving truths of the Christian faith. Do not call my reflections on your Magazine obtrusive, and my manner of writing you pretentious and egotistic; for my motive assuredly is not of that kind. I write to you cordially, and to show how noble and good I found your letter. . . . I wish your ‘reply’ might be printed as a tract, and sent broadcast over the land.”

One word further. Controversy we do not like, and will not have, except in self-defence. But of all things to be avoided is the constant attempt to cover over differences of opinion under a make-believe that they are not differences,—under an agreement to call white black, and red green. A denomination which can exist only by having its theologies constantly shaken up, like a kaleidoscope, to the utter confusion of all honest people who look through it, does not deserve to exist at all. Fellowship is worthless and hollow, and unworthy of the name, if it is only to be had in this cowardly way. Honest opinion is to be respected; and the more sharply and clearly uttered, the better. We fellowship all who will fellowship us in Christian fellowship, if Christian they are; in the broad fellowship of a common humanity, if they are not. It is too late for any one to pretend, that opinions are a test of character; and all the more inexcusable is it to confound them, and try to make them look alike when they are not. It does not follow, because they are not a test of personal character, that they are not of immense importance in the cause of humanity. Our own we have always aimed to state with perfect deference to the opinions and motives of others; and, when assailed and misrepresented, we mean to reply, if at all, in language, not that conceals and confounds thought, but makes it known: else what were the dictionaries made for?

Radicalism makes a grave mistake in supposing, that the rights of speech are all on one side; that the cherished opinions of others cannot only be assailed, but flouted at and caricatured, while it is very wicked and uncharitable to touch its own. Sheer justice would have required of the “Inquirer” to give its readers so much

of our reply as refutes the misrepresentations of its own columns; instead of which, it reads us a solemn lesson on controversy, which, in this case, it was among the first to inaugurate. s.

#### NURSING AMONGST THE POOR

Is practised very successfully in England, as we learn from an interesting English pamphlet on the "Organization of Nurses," which contains "An account of the Liverpool Nurses' Training-school, its foundation, progress, and operation in Hospital, District, and Private Nursing," with an Introduction and Notes by Florence Nightingale. The pamphlet is full of interesting matter. The need of training for the work of nursing is very great. In a hospital where great stress was laid upon good habits, only four nurses proved to be temperate. Of the twenty-five thousand four hundred and sixty-six women returned as nurses in Great Britain, in 1851, a large number were sadly inefficient. Quite worthy of attention is the method of attaching lady nurses to Provident Dispensaries. One of the indirect advantages of this form of ministering is well presented by the author, as follows:—

"Much has been said and written of the duty and importance of more sympathy and intercourse between rich and poor, of the dangerous tendency of civilization, and its subdivision of labor, in widening the separation between them; but, to do any good, such connection and intercourse must be natural and enforced. Now, in sickness and death, rich and poor are on common ground. In this work the sympathy between them is so natural, the results are so apparent, so immediate, and satisfactory, that, if the proper nurses could be furnished, we believe there would be comparatively little difficulty in interesting kindly disposed persons, connected with the different districts of Liverpool, in the work of superintending and furnishing (or collecting) for their own district the necessary appliances and comforts."

As an example of the work done, take the following:—

"Example No. 1.—Afflicted with asthma and other diseases. Found lying on the floor, covered with bed sores, and so thin that she had to be lifted on a sheet. Her husband is a porter, with two children, unable to pay for nursing. She was attended by the dispensary doctor, but in other respects was left to the mercy of the world, in a low neighborhood, in dirt and bad air, wretched in body and mind, causing her husband to feel wretched also, on coming home and finding his house in such a condition: to use the man's own expression, he thought he was forsaken both by

God and man. Our nurse comes in, washes her, and lends bedstead and bedding, and shows how to use an air-cushion, changes her linen, &c., cleans the house, persuades the husband to whitewash the apartments. Suitable nourishment is sent, and she and the household are now in comparative comfort: she is able to get up. The man is now helpful and hopeful, and has added by his own exertions and savings to the comfort of his home."

Let the following extracts illustrate the spirit of the charity: —

"Much of the value of the District Nursing depends on the personal intercourse between the educated, refined, and virtuous woman who gives of her abundance of means, mind, and heart, and the poor, ignorant, and often erring whom her bounty relieves and her sympathy soothes; while she receives, in return, that peace and enlargement of soul which, I believe, the rich can hardly obtain, save by taking personal interest in, and care of, their poorer neighbors. Every observant student of human nature must be struck with the amount of mischief caused to both rich and poor, by the marked separation between their lives and interests, — a separation which the organization of civilized society ever tends to widen more and more. The poor are pauperized and degraded when they receive from the mechanical operation of organized societies that dole into which no feeling of true charity, of Christian brotherhood, and personal kindness, enters to soften the sting of dependence, and create a sense of personal affection; or receive that dole almost as they receive the parish allowance, with as little thankfulness, and as little sense of the duty of enabling themselves speedily to do without it. The rich, on the other hand, who deal with the poor only through such societies, find no relief, in this kind of mechanical charity, from the narrowness, timidity, and unrest which riches so often create, and which are the natural fruits of hearts and intellects starved and stunted for want of that nourishment and exercise in personal well-doing and in kind offices to living individuals, — not to a class in the abstract, — which God intended to correct the benumbing influences of wealth."

"One point has occasionally been raised to which it may be well to advert. Some have objected to allow the ladies of their family to take part in the work, for fear of infection. With very slight precautions, this risk is much less than that incurred by calling in a doctor. The nurse can always tell the lady superintendent where she may safely go, and can avoid visiting her on days when, or in clothes in which, she has attended infectious cases; whereas the doctor must go from patient to patient without any such precautions. But, if the risk were greater than it is, we should have no right to flinch from it. Life was given, not to be hoarded, but to be carefully and wisely spent. The rich and their children enjoy all the benefits of knowledge and of wealth; among others, all the appliances that knowledge can devise and wealth can purchase to avert or to cure disease. Incumbent on the possession of wealth and knowledge is

the duty of ministering to those who have them not, and the risks incident to that duty we are not at liberty to shun.\*

"‘A religious organization,’ it has been suggested, ‘is necessary to the perfect success of your undertaking.’ A religious organization, in the best sense of the phrase, I trust that we possess; but what is too often meant by the words is a dogmatic or sectarian bond. This I believe to be neither necessary nor desirable. The lady superintendent of the Home and Training School has always endeavored to instil religious motives, and a religious sense of professional duty, into the minds of her pupils; and, though among these there are members of many different sects, we are never troubled with religious discord. Good work, faithfully performed, has a tendency to enlarge the mind of a Christian, and purify his spirit from sectarian bigotry; to bring into strong relief those principles of faith and practice which, as the Great Judge has assured us, will guide His judgment; and to indispose the laborers to ‘judge’ one another.”

Possibly these paragraphs may prove to be especially seasonable, though we pray that they may only have that significance which must always attach to such simplicity and sincerity. E.

#### THE TIMES WE LIVE IN.

WHAT a changing world is this in which we live! We *antediluvians*, whose age dates back fifty years or more, are often reminded that the world of to-day is not the world of our childhood. It may be far better: in many respects undoubtedly it is so, but surely it is not the same. The fashions of dress are not more changed than the habits of thought, style of pronunciation in many cases, supposed facts in the natural sciences, &c., &c. A graduate from Harvard, of some thirty years ago, amused us lately by the confession, that, on some points of pronunciation, where he had felt perfectly strong, he had “been obliged to knock under” to a young man fresh from an inferior college, and who even there had been regarded as very imperfectly educated. For ourselves, we consider it decidedly most prudent, instead of asserting positively that a thing is so and so, where we were once well posted, to remark very humbly that it used to be so; which,

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\* True nursing knows nothing of infection, except to prevent it. Cleanliness, fresh air from open windows, with unremitting attention to the patient, are the only defence a true nurse either asks or needs. Wise and humane management of the patient is the best safeguard against infection. — *Miss Nightingale's Notes on Nursing.*

in fact, we often think, amounts very nearly to the same thing as admitting that it is so no longer. Some words have undergone two transformations; so that the one which we were at some pains to substitute for our first pronunciation is displaced, and we must learn to return to that originally taught us. If we once prided ourselves a little on accuracy in these things, we are in a fair way to be cured of the weakness by these oft-repeated, wholesome checks upon our vanity.

The intercourse between young gentlemen and ladies, and older ones also, has undergone a wonderful change. Either we of a generation ago, in our girlhood, were over-strict, or the girls of the present day are over-free; though, of course, there are and were many exceptions to this general remark. Perhaps we did retain too much of the staid habits of our grandmothers. It is a pity that the full pleasure and benefit of intercourse and friendship between men and women of whatever age should be abridged by any mere conventionality. But there seem in the nature of things to be limits, beyond which a woman may not pass without some detriment to her dignity and delicacy. There are bounds, too, which an honorable man cannot pass with impunity. Was it a delusion that once led us to think it best, that a married man and woman, or those who were engaged, which formerly was nearly equivalent to marriage, should avoid paying or receiving very particular attentions in or from another quarter? Custom sanctions many things; but the delicate and Christian spirit must take counsel of itself, and rather keep within than exceed the bounds of caution and safety.

To come to things even more serious than these, those who associate constantly with the young, especially if feeling any responsibility for their conduct, (and who can wholly escape this responsibility?) are almost daily met by questions very difficult to answer satisfactorily to themselves or to the inquirers. In regard to the observance of forms, especially of public worship and the more private hours of the Sunday, how much is vital? how much may safely be done away? The sabbath, as it once was, has pretty nearly disappeared from among us as a denomination, — at least in our cities and larger towns. Oh, the blessed sabbaths of the olden time! when, amid the embowering shades of the quiet country-village, all nature was at rest, and the very peace of heaven seemed to settle on the soul; when the fa-

ther and the mother still shed their saintly influence throughout the venerable dwelling, and the light of their hallowed countenances was like unto the smile of God. "From the rising of the sun even unto the going-down of the same," a holy calm pervaded the place,—

"And all the babble of life's angry voices  
Died in hushed stillness at its peaceful door."

How beautiful are those days seen through the vista of years ! But now, if one would enjoy such a sabbath of rest, he must not only bolt his door and close his blinds, but shut his eyes and ears also ; and, even then, happy would he be if he could call back the Heavenly Dove to brood over his breast.

Yet, beautiful as these days of sacred retirement were to us in our adult years, it must be confessed, that to the child there was often a weariness in the monotonous hours, broken only by the morning and afternoon church-going, which is not generally a favorite recreation with the young. The fading-out of the sunlight on the eastern mountain-top was apt to be looked upon as a striking-off of fetters from limb and spirit too long confined. The memory of this makes me hesitate to enforce a very strict Sunday discipline on children of the present time. Yet how far we can afford to give them a dispensation from church-going, serious reading, and quiet on this day, is a very grave question. To the inquiry, What is the use of these forms ? we may answer, that, being creatures of flesh as well as of spirit, with the world of sense ever surrounding and pressing upon us, we need thus to be reminded of things unseen, and to be quickened in spirit by their influence. But we are answered, that, so far from quickening, these forms are often a weariness to soul and body. Or do we appeal as a motive to the influence of example, and the importance of the institution to the community, the spirit of the age hardly admits the force of this argument.

It sometimes seems as if no other power remained to us but to pray that nothing vital to ourselves or others may be carried away by the rushing, mighty tide of free thought and action ; while, by the godly simplicity and sincerity of our own lives, avoiding austerity on the one hand, and laxity on the other, we strive to win souls to the Christian life. Let us plant ourselves firmly on the Rock of Ages. Then, though the rain descend, and the floods come, and the winds blow and beat upon us, our strong foundation will not be moved.

## GLEANINGS FROM FOREIGN PERIODICALS.

A REMARKABLE article has lately appeared in the leading French journal, "*Revue des Deux Mondes*," on the moral bearing of the great Continental military operations. The writer thinks there was never a struggle undertaken that had so little to justify it. It has not been pretended, that any nation has been seriously hurt in its honor or interest. The Italians attempted to repossess Venice, only because the power of Austria was divided, and not because the Venetians were worse off than they have been for years; while, in other portions of Continental Europe, the mass of the people are indifferent to the strife, hardly know what they are fighting for,—know only that they are the puppets and playthings in the hands of kings and dynasties that are seeking some new map of empire. The feelings of the people have been revealed by the fact, that, in some instances, armies have marched to war, cheering those who were called their enemies, but whom they did not regard as such; and the strange manner in which kindred have been forced to take opposite sides is intimated by what is true of Queen Victoria's sons-in-law, some of whom are fighting on one side, and some on the other. Meanwhile, it is evident that there is springing up a deep, popular disgust at kings and aristocrats, who play such tricks before high heaven. In some places, large affiliated societies have been formed to diffuse a knowledge of republican principles. The pusillanimity and cowardice of the kings and princes of the petty States, who have fled to Paris and London with their treasures, and left their subjects to take care of themselves, have produced a deep impression on the popular mind. A renewed interest in American institutions and American ideas has been everywhere awakened. It has been stated in Parliament, as a well-ascertained fact, that, among the workmen in some large English establishments, more interest is taken in American politics than in English; and, what we confess seems surprising, more American than English newspapers are read. It is a just retribution for that gross hypocrisy which has no moral rebuke of this great causeless, fratricidal war; but was continually pouring forth its crocodile tears that we in America were cutting each other's throats, when what we were fighting for was the maintenance of the very life of our nation. Probably, it is this re-action in favor of democracy which has alarmed



the aristocrats of Europe, and has led to the restoration of a Tory ministry in England, and to early projects of a general pacification. So the people are hustled back and forth, — for *war*, when kings and ministers would secure new power; for *peace*, when popular rights are likely to gain an unsafe ascendancy.

TO THOSE who watch the progress of events in Italy, it has been a question of great interest whether Bourbon and papal intrigue would not be busy while Victor Emmanuel's soldiers are everywhere called off to swell his armies. It seems that, in Naples, a re-action in favor of the ex-king has been repressed only by very large and summary arrests; while the pope has been checkmated by steps more decisive than any other which Napoleon has taken. The French minister to Rome has announced with the utmost distinctness, that the first papal soldier caught disturbing the peace of Italy would be immediately sent like a felon to the galleys. Of course the pope's personal sympathies are strongly expressed in favor of Austria. His chagrin at the recent turn of events can be imagined. Nor is this the only sorrow he has lately felt. One of his nephews, it is said, is fighting on the Italian side; and some mirth has been occasioned in Rome by a little incident happening in his circle of kindred. He and an aged sister have not been on good terms. Being told that she was dying, he sent her his papal blessing; on hearing of which, she had strength enough to sit up in her bed, and to declare, in terms which scandalized all believers, that she would not receive it.

THE late suppression of religious houses in Italy, by a formal and very decided vote of the Italian Government, is one of those great events that mark the progress of religious freedom. We have all read what a vast stride onward a like step was in England, under Henry VIII. The whole world rung with it. Now it takes place throughout the kingdom of Italy, and hardly has the press of this country noticed it. It has happened to us to visit establishments, having hundreds of acres, and palatial arrangements, where a dozen idle monks lived in the greatest affluence. The appropriation of these vast estates to the defence of the country recalls many like steps of the popes, who have robbed the churches to make cannon for the fort of San Angelo. Jerusalem itself is said to have got its name by Moses spoiling the heathen temples to construct and defend the city.